

PlayStation plus

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KICK OFF '97,

ALL-STAR SOCCER

IT'S BARGAIN SEASON!

CUT-PRICE GAMES

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IT'S OPEN SEASON!

PLAYSTATION LOST WORLD

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HE IS DEATH AND HELL WILL
THE SECOND HORSEMAN SHALL BE
RELEASED TO RADE THE HUMANITY FROM THE
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TO CONQUER...UNTIL THE END OF THE

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ABC
CONSUMER PRESS

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Marvel Super Heroes

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Capcom once again reaffirm their supremacy over the 2D beat 'em up. Who would win if the Incredible Hulk had a fight with Spider-man? And if Doctor Doom was to scrap it out with the winner, who would reign supreme? All these questions and more can be answered as Capcom and Virgin unveil the PlayStation version of *Marvel Super Heroes*. With the likes of *X-Men: Children of the Atom* being scrapped halfway through development, *Marvel Super Heroes* is Capcom's chance to flex its muscles on the PlayStation, as it takes all their *Street Fighter* Expertise, and blend in the biggest sprites ever seen on the Sony machine. And we've got it first...



The Lost World

74

Something has survived! And EA have cloned a game from it!

One of this summer's cinematic blockbusters, EA has snapped up the rights to the PlayStation version of *The Lost World*. The film retreads the events of *Jurassic Park* with more dino attacks and fancy effects, but the game allows the user to assume the role of the dinosaurs themselves and wreak havoc across Site B. But can the game live up to the hype of the film? Our exclusive review reveals all.



Syndicate Wars Solved

66

The second part of our extensive guide to Bullfrog's classic.

The second instalment of our *Syndicate Wars* guide deals with the game's incredibly difficult later stages. The hardest missions have been broken down into bite-size pieces, and all the main dangers are outlined. If you are a die-hard *Syndicate Wars* fan who is stuck in a later stage, allow us to assist. And, boy, are you going to need help as things heat up!

Volume 2 Issue 12



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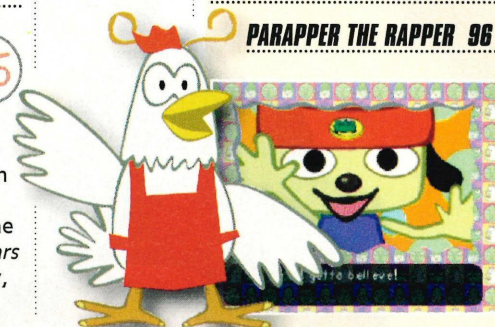
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NEXT GENERATION FOR PLAYSTATION PLUS • IS LIZ HURLEY THE NEW LARA CROFT? • SONY JOINS FORCES WITH THE PREMIERSHIP AND F1 • MORE LIGHTGUN FUN FROM NAMCO

WE'RE NOT ONES TO REST ON OUR LAURELS AT PLAYSTATION PLUS. AFTER MONTHS OF RESEARCH, WE HAVE WORKED OUT A WAY TO MAKE OUR MAGAZINE EVEN BETTER. AS SUCH, AS OF NEXT ISSUE, PLAYSTATION PLUS IS TO UNDERGO A CHANGE IN STYLE. WE'LL STILL BE FEATURING OUR UNIQUE AND TOTALLY TRUSTWORTHY REVIEWING STYLE, BUT THERE WILL BE MORE COVERAGE OF MORE GAMES FROM NOW ON. THE NUMBERS OF TIPS IS ALSO SET TO BE UPPEDED, AND IN GENERAL YOU WILL BE GETTING MORE FOR YOUR MONEY. INTRIGUED? ALL WILL BE REVEALED NEXT MONTH. SEE YOU THEN, STEVE MERRETT, EDITOR

The Best Gets Better

THINGS ARE GONNA BE A BIT different round here from now on - and we mean different.

Your super soaraway PlayStation Plus has been given a wash and brush-up and as of next month boasts a whole new image. It'll look a bit different on the shelf, so beware. First off, the logo's been changed to the one below - so keep your eye out for it on September 25. And that's not all. We've changed the size, making it bigger and better than ever before.

But hey, beauty's not just

skin-deep. Take a look inside and you'll see the changes are still ringing. We're boosting the reviews coverage to Godzilla size, meaning you get to see more of the game as well as knowing exactly what our expert testers thought of it. We've got tons more tips on more titles, so with our help you can cane the game and mash your mates. We'll also be previewing the best games first so you'll know exactly what to look out for in the games shop. And as if that weren't

enough, we'll have bigger and better indexes and guides, so you'll be able to tell at-a-glance exactly what deserves your cash. What's more, we got some excellent previews and reviews lined up for the coming months. So there it is. The date is September 25, the venue is your local mag shop. We'll be there in our new togs, make sure you are too.



IS THIS HOW LIZ WOULD LOOK AS LARA? OR WILL SANDRA BULLOCK PIP HURLEY TO THE POST.

Liz Hurley as Lara Croft?

FASHION MODEL AND POSH totty Liz Hurley is rumoured to play Lara Croft in the forthcoming *Tomb Raider* movie. Estee Lauder bombshell Liz has apparently been approached to play the gun-toting girlie in the film which is currently in early stages of development.

Tomb Raider creators Core Design couldn't confirm Liz as the silver-screen Lara, but did offer that although she fits the role perfectly, she might not be adventurous

enough to take the part. Core did express interest in Sandra Bullock though, who is also on the wanted list to star as Lara. Either way, it sounds pretty good to us!



OUT NOW shelves this month...

PARAPPA THE RAPPER

For just under 30 quid you get a game that's original, extremely rewarding and a good laugh to play. It's reviewed on page 96 in this issue, and scored 89%.



ALL STARS SOCCER

After the excellent ISS Pro we'd hoped footie games would just get better. They haven't. The abysmal All Stars Soccer is slated in this issue on page 94, scoring just 34%.



Courier Crisis

COURIER CRISIS IS A RACING game with a difference. There are no souped-up cars or meaty motorcycles, just a pedal bike and a pannier full of parcels. Why? Because this is *Paperboy* for the '90s, with the polygon pedal pusher going up against the clock to deliver the packages in time. Obstacles such as traffic and

pedestrians can slow the player down, but it's the cops who'll relentlessly chase down any reckless courier who breaks the law by cutting through crowded shopping malls. Who cares about the pigs though? Flick 'em the Vees and sneak off down a back alley. *Courier Crisis* hits the street this Autumn.



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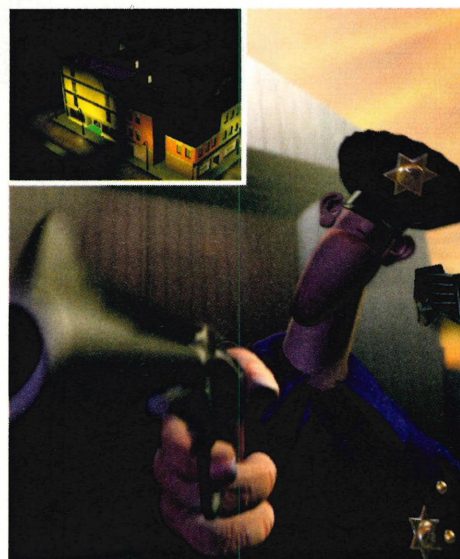


COO. YOUR SPORTING LIFE IS GOING TO HAVE A BIT OF A PLAYSTATION BIAS THIS SEASON

SONY HAS JUST SIGNED A £1 million deal with the Premier League, which will secure the PlayStation exclusive signage for the next three years. The deal kicks off when the season starts this August and follows an announcement that Sony is spending a huge £10 million sponsoring the UEFA Champions League, also for three years. Considering 74% of PlayStation owners play or

watch football, and players like Paul Ince, Jamie Redknapp and Ian Wright are paid-up PlayStation freaks, it's money well spent.

PlayStation has also sponsored the Prost Mugen Honda Formula 1 racing team, in what is obviously part of Sony's bid to flood the globe in all things PlayStation. Is there no escaping the grey wonder?



Respect Inc.



SLEEP WITH THE FISHES IN RESPECT INC

RESPECT INC. IS A HUMOUROUS shoot 'em up set in 1920s Chicago. As a wannabe crime boss who's just arrived in the Windy City, the aim of the game is to gain respect from the other mafia hopefuls through bribery, corruption and intimidation. Of course, no mobster is

complete without a sharp suit so the first stop is the local tailors (hmm, could this be the first ever 'suit 'em up?'). The game itself is similar to *Syndicate Wars* in that you control a team of mobsters running through the streets, but you have direct control over them *Loaded*-style. Visually *Respect Inc.* has a distinct cartoon style, complemented by 'authentic' jazz music which fits in perfectly with the gangster setting. It's being released through Psygnosis and will appear on the shelves this Christmas.

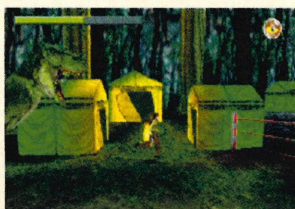
AGENT ARMSTRONG

Virgin's lacklustre shoot 'em up not only looks average, it's plays like a brick too. Reviewed in issue 23, this blaster was lukewarmly received, scoring 75%.



THE LOST WORLD

The game is similar to the film – looks good but there's not much meat beneath the slick surface. Dino lovers will love it, but gameplay means it only scored 80% this issue.



TRANSPORT TYCOON

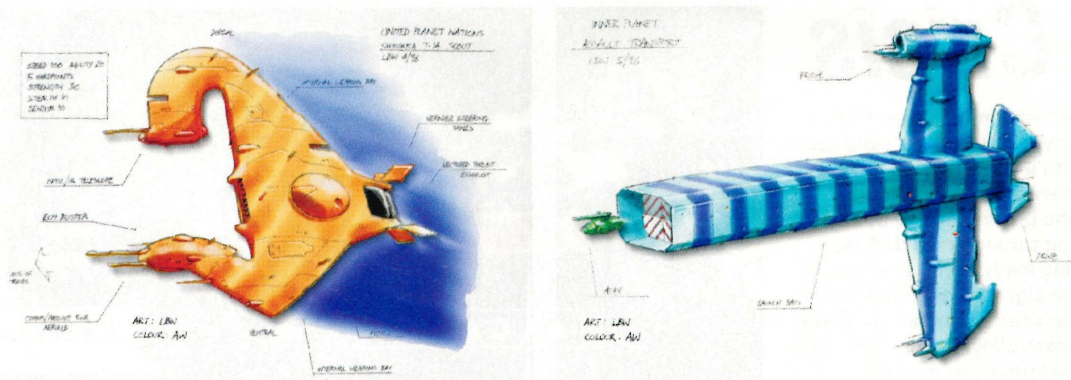
Fancy controlling an entire transport network and making sure it runs smoothly? You can in *Transport Tycoon*, a resource management game which scored 86% in issue 21.



EXPLOSIVE RACING

The sequel to *Burning Road* is released mid-September and there's not a single review copy in sight! Check out next month for the low-down on *Explosive Racing*.





THESE EARLY
SKETCHES OF
ALIEN SPACE-
CRAFT IN
XENOCRACY
GIVE SOME
IDEA OF HOW
THE FINAL
SHIPS WILL
LOOK.

Xenocracy

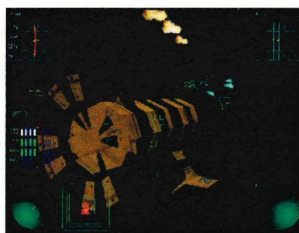
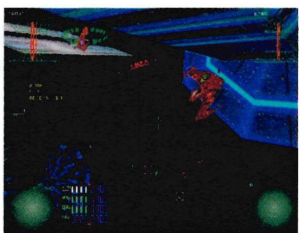
FORGET THE MOVIE GLOSS AND limited gameplay of *Wing Commander IV*, *Xenocracy* is a space combat sim that promises slick graphics and gripping gameplay. As a peacekeeper patrolling the outer limits of the Solar System your mission is to defend against an alien attack. Much of the game is spent in the cockpit of a starfighter, dogfighting in deep space or taking the battle to the surface of one of the many worlds.

With 3D texture-mapped graphics, *Xenocracy* looks very smart indeed. It's varied too, and after all, what other PlayStation space game offers the chance to fly through the rings of Saturn or down into the frozen wastes of Pluto?

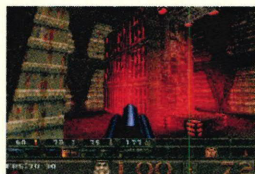
The game's storyline is non-linear, so even when the enemy threat has been wiped out there's loads of different routes to replay. The outcome of each campaign isn't determined purely by the

player's performance in the cockpit either. Strategic choices branch the plot in different directions, concluding either in galactic success or universal failure depending on the route chosen.

Xenocracy is being published by Grolier Interactive, with a provisional release date of Autumn. However, PlayStation Plus has yet to see the game up, running and in all its glory so we reckon it's unlikely to surface much before Christmas.



CANNED! QUAKE



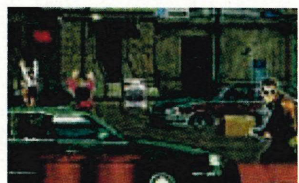
It had to happen. For almost two years the PlayStation has been sitting on the Saturn from a great height, then Sega gets its own back. How? *Quake* is coming to the Saturn, but not to PlayStation. Apparently three separate developers have attempted to port the PC classic to the 32bit Sony machine but to no avail. Still, we've got *Duke Nukem* so things aren't looking that bad.

THE LEVELS IN
POINT BLANK
MAY LOOK
VARIED BUT
THE OBJECTIVE
REMAINS THE
SAME. BAG
THE GOODIES
BUT WATCH
OUT FOR THE
BOMBS.

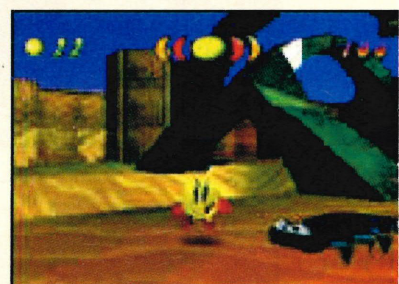
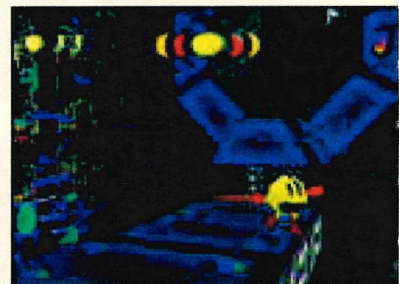
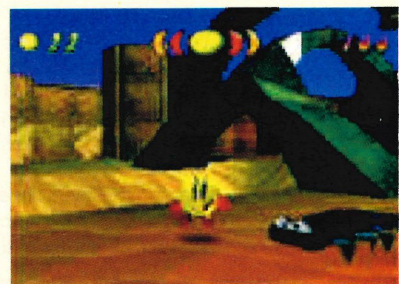
Point Blank

FOLLOWING ON FROM THE success of *Time Crisis* in Japan, Namco has already announced it will be releasing its other arcade shooter, *Point Blank*. It's a humorous gun game that pushes the player to the limits by challenging them with randomly picked tests of skill. These range from easy to down-

right impossible, and include a handful of rock-hard stages in which you must rescue friendly explorers Dan and Don. *Point Blank* is light-hearted compared to *Time Crisis*, but best of all it's for one or two players so it's likely to be bundled with the G-Con 45. More news nearer its early '98 release date.



Pac-Man Ghost Zone

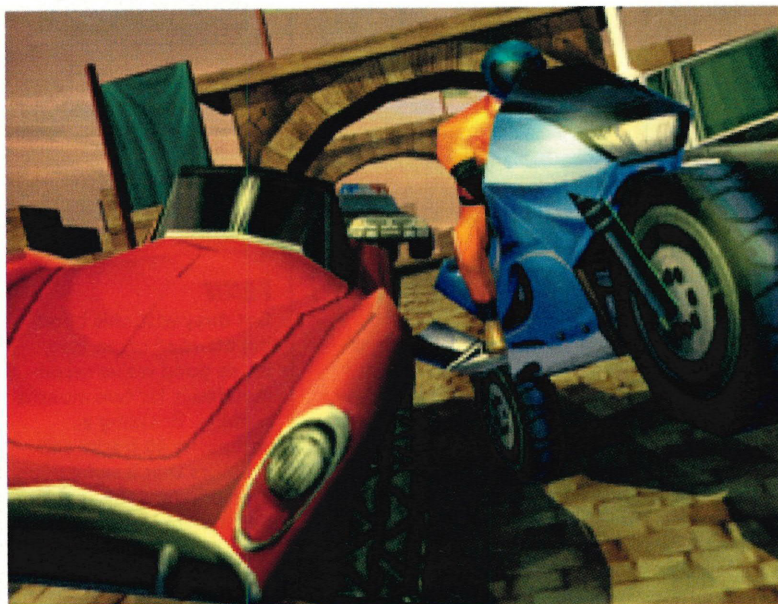


PAC-MAN'S RETURN TO THE PlayStation is considerably more impressive than his retro compilation debut, appearing in glorious 3D for the first time in his decade-spanning history. *Pac-Man Ghost Zone* is a Mario 64-style arcade adventure with the yellow pill-popper gobbling his way through 50 lavishly detailed levels.

The evil Ghost Lord waits for Paccy at the end of the game, who along the way must avoid some devilishly wicked tricks and traps, solve brain-busting puzzles and negotiate the winding maze-like environment.

Luckily Pac-Man can do more than just pop pills now, and is able to run, jump, slide, and swim, and can even fly up other areas of the game. While *Pac-Man Ghost Zone* sounds fantastic, we won't have the chance to find out what its like until next year. Namco is currently working on the project which is still a long way from completion, so it's due for release in Japan at the end of the Autumn. Expect an early 1998 release in the UK.

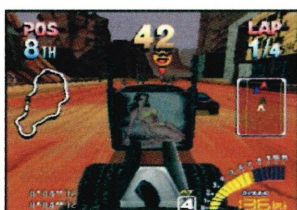




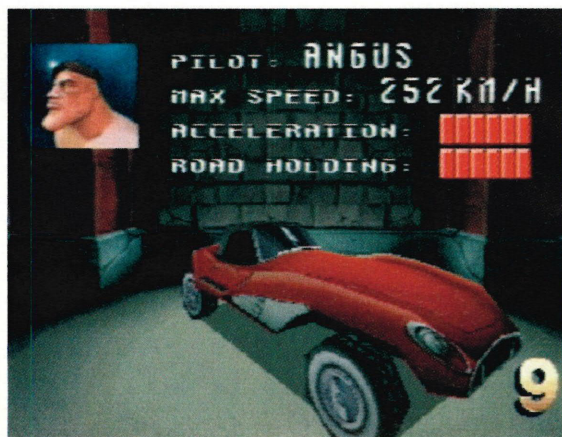
Explosive Racing

FUNSOFT RETURNS TO THE PlayStation scene with its high-powered sequel to *Burning Road*, *Explosive Racing*. Due to hit on September 20th, *Explosive Racing* is an adrenalin-packed ride around five courses, from the frozen wastes of Antarctica to the dusty plains of the Wild West. Initially there are six cars to choose from, although another nine are revealed by finishing the championship in first place and completing the various mirror modes.

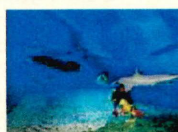
Each of the circuits is littered with jumps, obstacles and of course other drivers, although players can opt for a full-on head-to-head against another human competitors using the link-up option. But whether you're after a white-knuckle ride through the streets of San Francisco or powersliding round the hills of Scotland, *Explosive Racing* promises the lot. Look out for the review next month.



YIKES HERE COMES ANOTHER RACING GAME. EXPLOSIVE RACING COMES INTO A MARKET NOT EXACTLY STARVED OF DRIVING GAMES.



Treasures of the Deep



DISCOVER THE HIDDEN DEPTHS of the ocean in Namco's underwater adventure, *Treasures of the Deep*. Choosing from eight submersible vehicles, the player is faced with 14 missions, from treasure hunts to exploring underwater Aztec caves and even disabling a terrorist nuclear bomb. The levels are diverse, with hammerhead sharks plaguing

the Gulf of Mexico and killer whales creating havoc in the Northwest Pacific. Mankind is the ultimate enemy though, as you're not the only one hungry for lost treasure. Be prepared to use force then, 'cause the only way you're gonna lay your hands on the gold is to frag the other bounty hunters out of the water! *Treasures of the Deep* is released this Christmas.

a poem about

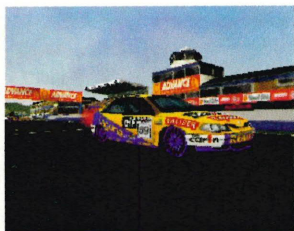
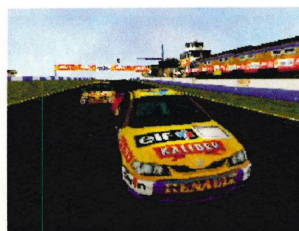
A Naughty Weekend

by Purple Ronnie

If I wanted a naughty weekend
I'd book us both into the Ritz
And rub you with Vimto ice lollies
All over your wobbly bits



DIFFERENT TO RAGE RACER AND SEGA RALLY. CODEMASTERS CLAIM TOCA IS 'DEEP'.



TOCA Touring Car Championship

THE 1997 TOCA TOURING CAR Championship is the subject of Codemasters' entry to the racing genre. Using the customary third-person view, *TOCA* offers the player a selection of rallying vehicles for the assorted rough road courses. Codemasters has made full use of the *TOCA* licence to create a game it

claims is as close to the real thing as possible. As such, all the cars featured have been recreated to the last detail, while courses - which include Donnington Park GP, Thruxton and Snetterton - have been copied from Ordnance Survey plans. The races are played against a friend or a CPU opponent,

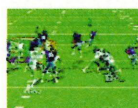
but Codemasters is keen to stress *TOCA* is significantly deeper than the likes of, say, *Sega Rally* or *Rage Racer*. The cars are modelled using real physics, and as such benefit from more realistic handling, with spins and crashes looking all the better for them. *TOCA* is currently lined up for an October release.

Jimmy Johnson's VR Football '98

NEW FROM INTERPLAY'S VR Sports range is *Jimmy Johnson's VR Football '98*, an American football game endorsed by the head coach of the Miami Dolphins. Due for release this November, *VR Football '98* uses a smart 3D engine to shift the game's detailed graphics, but it's the team stats and in-depth play rosters that make this an interesting bag. All the current NFL teams are featured, plus classic line-ups from past

seasons. The play book is overflowing with offensive and defensive moves, while the custom coach option allows players to create and use their own plays.

With motion-captured animation and well over 100 video sequences, *VR Football '98* will look the business. Whether it will better existing PlayStation American footie games remains to be seen when it's reviewed in the next couple of months.



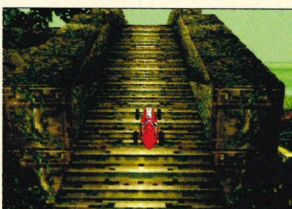
Supersonic Racers 2XS

AFTER THE LUKE-WARM reception of *Supersonic Racers*, Mindscape is hoping for a red-hot welcome to its all new sequel, *Supersonic Racers 2XS*. Taking the concept of the original game a stage further, this sequel is a bizarre racing game set across 16 tracks. Each of the land-

scapes, from the Wild West to the lethal traffic of the highway, is a full 3D environment with drivers motoring up twisting mountainsides and speeding through tunnels. Up to four players can compete simultaneously, choosing from eight vehicles and using an assortment of

weapons and power-ups to cheat their way to victory. Short cuts also provide a faster route to the top of the championship table, unlocking hidden tracks in the process. Get ready for some truly manic multi-player racing from Mindscape around October time.

WITH NEAT GRAPHICS AND COOL CARS, SUPERSONIC RACERS 2XS CAN ONLY BE BETTER THAN THE AVERAGE ORIGINAL.



RECOMMENDED



V-RALLY

Get dirty with this blinding off-road racer. Hey, it's so good we've recommended it for two months running. Boasting a whopping 40 tracks and graphics that'll make your eyes pop out, this is the best racer in a long time.



PARAPPA THE RAPPER

He's the hip-hop hero whose reputation precedes him. Parappa the Rapper is the world's first hip-hop 'em up, with players donning the customary woolly hat and sneakers to rap their way to stardom. Cool.



SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER

The best puzzle game in the world... EVER. Ryu and co get super-cute and drop coloured blocks all over the place. It may be simple but heck, this baby sure is addictive.



SYNDICATE WARS

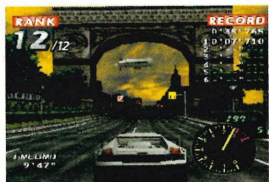
Bullfrog's glimpse into a corporate-run future is a cool cyberpunk strategy epic. It's a massive game set in a realistic 3D environment, controlling teams of cyborg agents with the intent of taking over the world. Very smart stuff.

TWIX® JUNIOR GAMESPLAYER OF THE YEAR

HIT THE BRAKES AND POWER-UP W



After the phenomenal success of last year's event, PlayStation Plus has once again teamed up with the confectionery masters at TWIX® to bring you the ultimate gaming challenge in the known cosmos! Yes, once again we are on a quest to discover the TWIX® Junior Gamesplayer of the Year!



WIN £1000 OF PLAYSTATION GOODIES! WIN A YEAR'S WORTH OF TWIX® BARS! WIN £100 OF VIRGIN VOUCHERS!

THE EVENT: THE 1997 TWIX® JUNIOR GAMESPLAYER OF THE YEAR CHALLENGE!

THE DATE: OCTOBER 25, 1997 **THE PLACE:** VIRGIN MEGASTORE, OXFORD STREET, LONDON



WHAT'S ALL THIS, THEN?

It's fairly straightforward really. PlayStation Plus wants to hear from the very best *Rage Racer* players in the country! Fill in the form with your best times, and throw down the gauntlet to PlayStation owners everywhere as we try to find the greatest *Rage Racers*. We'll be choosing the seven best entries and whisking the lucky participants to London to take part in the final challenge - a head-to-head battle to the finish. In addition to those seven, last year's winner will be invited back to defend his title! Eight players enter but only one can be the winner!

HOW DO I ENTER?

When it comes to this challenge, we're looking for the best. Sit down with a TWIX® and think about your strategy before you insert your copy of *Rage Racer* and clock up the best possible lap time. We want your best time on the basic course, as played in Time Attack mode. We think you'll agree that when it comes down to speed and technique, there's no better test on Namco's stunning road racer. The one condition is that you use the basic supplied car, and none of the mega-fast souped-up turbo wagons!

WHAT CAN I WIN?

A wealth of gaming goodies will descend mightily upon the

winner of this, the finest of challenges! When it comes to the TWIX® Junior Gamesplayer of the Year, the stakes are high, but the rewards are spectacular!

THE GRAND PRIZE

The overall winner of the TWIX® Junior Gamesplayer of the Year walks away with their choice of £1000 worth of PlayStation gear, plus £100 of Virgin Megastore vouchers, which the winner can spend on absolutely anything in ANY Virgin Megastore. What's more, with this being a TWIX® challenge, the victorious player can also expect to be showered with TWIX® style confectionery!

ALL PARTICIPANTS

The final eight challengers will ALL receive boxes and boxes of TWIX® bars plus exclusive *Mechwarrior 2* jackets, as donated by the Virgin Megastore and a special medal!

WHAT NOW?

You've spent days and days honing your *Rage Racer* skills, but still you don't think you're good enough. Why not hit the brakes, and power-up with a TWIX®? Think about strategy and technique as you break for the unique chocolate/caramel/biscuit experience that you can only get with a TWIX®. Then back to the PlayStation for more hardcore games playing!

Once you're happy with your score, note it down on the coupon supplied and send in your entry with five empty TWIX® wrappers to TWIX® JUNIOR GAMESPLAYER OF THE YEAR 1997, PlayStation Plus, 37-39 Millharbour, Isle of Dogs, London E14 9TZ. The competition is only open to gamers under 18 years of age but you can enter as many times as you want. Entrants under 16 must be accompanied to the final by an adult. Sorry over 18s, but it is for junior players. Hey, them's the breaks...

IMPORTANT! YOU MUST ENCLOSE FIVE EMPTY TWIX® WRAPPERS WITH EACH ENTRY FORM (ANY TWIX WRAPPER ACCEPTED). NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. ALL ENTRY FORMS MUST REACH US BY 10/10/97 YOU MUST BE UNDER 18 TO ENTER. IF YOU ARE UNDER 16 AN ADULT MUST BE ABLE TO ACCOMPANY YOU TO THE CHALLENGE. ALL ENTRIES WILL BE CAREFULLY VETTED SO NO CHEATING! PLEASE NOTE THAT EMAP IMAGES CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY ENTRIES LOST OR DAMAGED IN THE POST. NORMAL COMPETITION RULES APPLY. PRIZE INCLUDES STANDARD FARE RETURN RAIL FARE TO LONDON.

TWIX® JUNIOR GAMESPLAYER OF THE YEAR ENTRY FORM

MY BEST TIME ON RAGE RACER'S BASIC COURSE IS.....

My name is.....

My age is.....

My address is.....

My home telephone number is.....

If aged under 16 please ask a parent or guardian to read and then sign the following:

I verify that the above details are correct and hereby give my permission for the above named person to take part in the TWIX® Junior Gamesplayer of the Year challenge, should they be selected.

Signed.....

Date.....

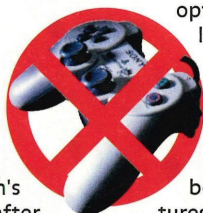


A BREAK FROM THE NORM

No analogue for V-Rally

OCEAN HAS REMOVED analogue controller compatibility from *V-Rally*, just days before it went on sale. The option to use the new controller, which was in the reviewable version of the game feature in last month's issue, was dumped after the game continually crashed

due to incompatibility problems. The four-player link-up option was eventually left out too, although Ocean is considering releasing an updated version of the game which will include both of these features. More news as soon as it happens.



TESTED

ANALOGUE PAD

THE ANALOGUE PAD IS AN OFFICIAL SONY PLAYSTATION PERIPHERAL. COSTING £24.99, IT'S AVAILABLE NOW.

Sony's analogue pad has been available in Japan for some time now, but has only just made it to UK shores. Looking like chunkier version of a standard PlayStation controller, the analogue pad has two thumb sticks which are used for steering in racing games, or double as a flight stick in some aerial combat sims.

It's extremely comfortable and proves effective with the few games that currently support the pad. *Porsche Challenge* is much easier to play, making the Boxster corner a lot more smoothly and giving greater control both in and out of tight bends. The analogue pad is also very good with *Air Combat 2* (reviewed on page 88), and again offers a greater level of control over your aircraft compared to a standard digital pad. The analogue option doesn't work with all games though. *Rage Racer* is a no-go for example, and so is *V-Rally*. Sadly, it doesn't vibrate either, a feature which was included for its Japanese release.

However, it's an extremely attractive alternative to the overpriced steering wheels on offer, and also doubles as a standard pad in digital mode. Better still, it's only seven quid more than an ordinary pad so heck, it's worth the cash.



Peripheral Price Cut

SONY HAS CUT THE PRICE OF both its official joypad and memory card. The standard pad, which used to be just under 25 quid, is now £17.99, while the memory card has been reduced by a fiver to £14.99. This follows the release of the analogue pad which retails at £24.99.



InterAct is in control

PERIPHERAL NEWIES INTERACT are set to release two new controllers for the PlayStation this summer. The first is the ProgramPad, a completely, um, programmable pad that's perfect for beat 'em ups. Using the program option, players can assign combos of up to 87 button presses (!) to a single key. It's ideal for cheating in *Tekken 2* by programming the pad so a 10-hit combo can be pulled off with the press of a button. The ProgramPad is comfortable to use and looks pretty cool too, but then it should, costing £30.

The PS Arcade stick is a monster, weighing in at a hefty £45. However,

you do get quality for your cash, as it's extremely sturdy and styled on the traditional *Street Fighter* stick. The buttons are large and responsive, while the micro-switched stick makes it easy to pull off fireballs and the like. There's also three-speed slow-motion and autofire. Both controllers are in the shops now - look out for them.



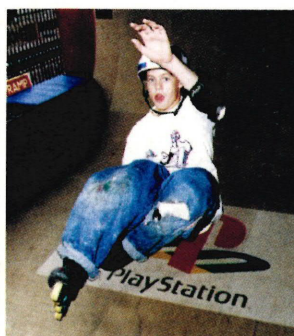
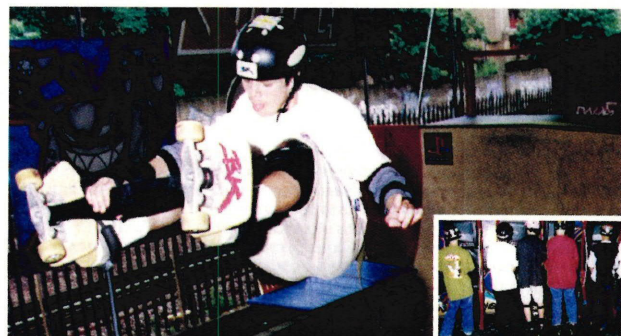
PlayStation Skatepark Opens

SONY PLAYSTATION HAS co-funded a new skatepark situated in the heart of London. The PlayStation Skatepark will play host to world championships but is also a facility available to the general public, and is part of a plan to keep extreme skat-

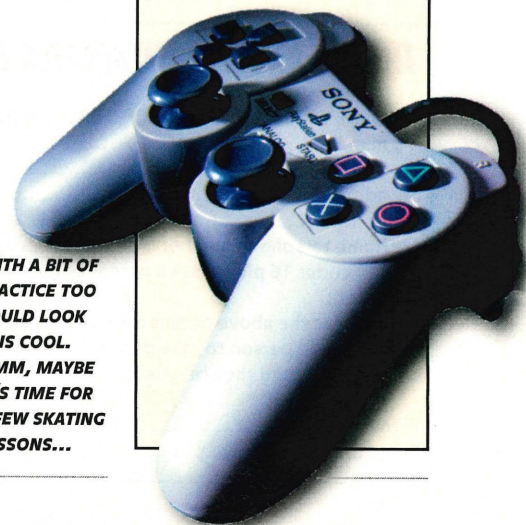
ing off the streets and out it in a safe environment. The park is open between noon and 4pm every day and costs £3 to get in. Inexperienced skaters have the chance to improve with the on-hand tuition available, plus there's an on-site first aider to patch

up any cuts and bruises.

So if you're up for grabbing some phat air, get down to the PlayStation Skatepark which can be found at Bay 65/66 Acklam Road, Ladbroke Grove, London, W10, or give them a call on 0181 969 4669.



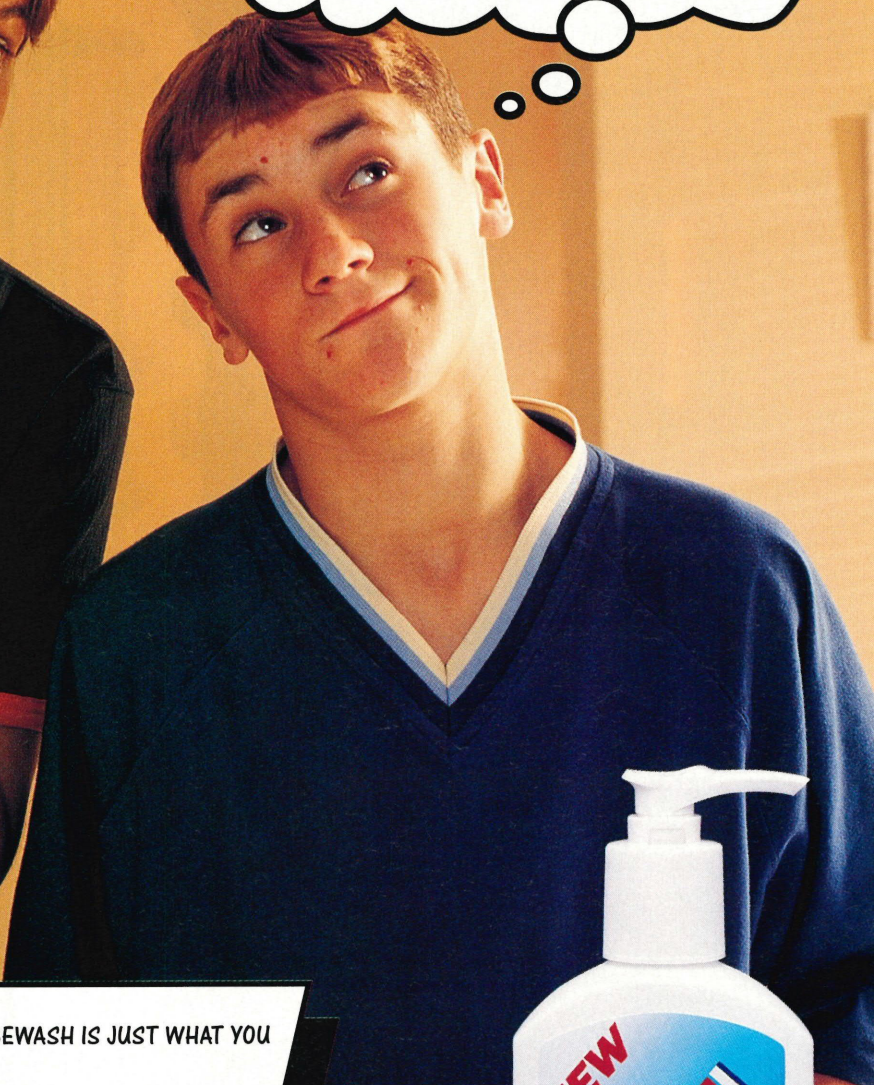
WITH A BIT OF PRACTICE TOO COULD LOOK THIS COOL. HMM, MAYBE IT'S TIME FOR A FEW SKATING LESSONS...



SATURDAY MORNING

**SPOTS? TRY THIS. IT'S NEW
CLEARASIL COMPLETE. IT'S FIVE TIMES BETTER
THAN SOAP AND IT'S DEAD SIMPLE!**

**SOUNDS A BIT
LIKE YOU!**



THAT'S RIGHT, DEAD SIMPLE! NEW CLEARASIL COMPLETE FACEWASH IS JUST WHAT YOU NEED TO HELP PREVENT ZITS.

CLEARASIL COMPLETE IS FIVE TIMES BETTER THAN ORDINARY SOAP AT BEATING SPOTS* AND IS AVAILABLE IN AN EASY TO USE PUMP ACTION BOTTLE.

ITS DEEP-CLEANSING MICROBEAD FORMULA AND SPECIAL SPOT STUFF GETS RIGHT TO THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM, KILLING BACTERIA WHICH CAN CAUSE UNWANTED ZITS.

USED EVERYDAY CLEARASIL COMPLETE WILL HELP KEEP YOUR SKIN FEELING CLEAN AND FRESH. ALTOGETHER, IT'S A VERY SIMPLE WAY TO HELP STAY ZIT-FREE.

ALL YOU NEED TO HELP BEAT SPOTS!



*CLINICAL STUDY RUN OVER 8 WEEK PERIOD.

8 CHE DESIGNERS' REPUBLIC (ISRAEL)
שפירא-דזיגנערס



golden
joystick
awards
1997



The 1997 *Golden Joystick Awards*

Sponsored by HMV and in association with Sony PlayStation and Nintendo 64

This could be your big chance to let the people who make your favourite PlayStation games know how much you appreciate their skill. We're also inviting you to tell us what you appreciate about our magazines, and there's the chance to WIN yourself an incredible prize!! In other words it's The Golden Joysticks 1997.

We're sure you care a lot about the PlayStation scene, otherwise what are you doing reading PlayStation Plus?! The Golden Joystick awards are designed to respect what matters to you as best we can. The awards are your opportunity to recognise those people who provide you with the best games, and the best gaming information. Take a look at the categories listed below, and decide for yourself who (or what) have been responsible for making games even cooler from 1996 through to 1997. The Golden Joysticks have been around for years, and are rated as one of the most important events of the software year - and it's because you do the voting! The 1997 Golden Joysticks are sponsored by HMV, in association with Nintendo 64 and Sony PlayStation, and as an incentive for your votes we are offering one lucky participant a state-of-the-art TV, while four runners-up will receive HMV vouchers to the tune of £100! Here are the categories to vote for:

SOFTWARE CATEGORIES

(1) BEST-LOOKING GAME

The game blew you away with its visuals. Consider variety, speed, detail, clarity, colour, and style.

(2) BEST-SOUNDING GAME

They told you to turn it down, but you couldn't hear them above the awesome noise from your PlayStation sound system!

(3) FAVOURITE GAME CHARACTER

Name the one character which you rate as the best for the PlayStation, or have bizarre dreams about - and yet still respect in the morning!

(4) PLAYSTATION PLUS BEST PLAYSTATION GAME

A tough category since there are so many big games for Sony's wonder machine. Only you know which one you've played 'til your fingers bled.

(7) MOST ORIGINAL GAME

Considering everything you've seen or played in the last year, decide which one could be considered truly unique.

MAGAZINE CATEGORIES

(10) BEST-LOOKING PAGES

Our designers work through the night to present games in the best possible way. Name the feature which made the game you adore come to life.

(11) SCOOP OF THE YEAR

PlayStation Plus prides itself on breaking the hottest videogame news stories. Name the one which took you days to recover from.

(12) BEST REVIEW WRITER

Of all the writers from the EMAP magazines (the titles are mentioned on this page) whose words do you value the most?

GAMES INDUSTRY CATEGORIES

(13) BEST AD

There have been some games ads recently which have been genuinely cool. A miracle! So, billboard or television - whose ad made you go 'Wow'?

(14) BEST DEVELOPMENT TEAM

These people make the games you play. Some are so skillful they deserve to become superstars.

(15) BEST SOFTWARE HOUSE

Companies who make sure the best games are made available to UK players. For example Virgin, or Acclaim.

YOU'RE A WINNER!

MAYBE VOTING FOR YOUR FAVOURITE VIDEOGAME-RELATED THINGS ISN'T INCENTIVE ENOUGH. SO WE'RE OFFERING A STATE-OF-THE-ART TV TO THE PERSON WHOSE NOMINATIONS COME CLOSEST TO THE OFFICIAL WINNERS, AND FOUR RUNNERS-UP PRIZES OF £100 OF HMV VOUCHERS - AND ALL BECAUSE YOU VOTED FOR YOUR FAVOURITE GAMES! EASY OR WHAT? CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES IS 21 OCTOBER 1997.



ENTRY VOUCHER

| | |
|-------|--|
| NAME: | |
|-------|--|

| | | | |
|------|--|---------------|--|
| AGE: | | TELEPHONE NO: | |
|------|--|---------------|--|

SOFTWARE CATEGORIES

| | |
|--|--|
| (1) BEST-LOOKING GAME | |
| (2) BEST-SOUNDING GAME | |
| (3) FAVOURITE GAME CHARACTER | |
| (4) PLAYSTATION PLUS BEST PLAYSTATION GAME | |
| (7) MOST ORIGINAL GAME | |

MAGAZINE CATEGORIES

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| (10) BEST-LOOKING PAGES | |
| (11) SCOOP OF THE YEAR | |
| (12) BEST REVIEW WRITER | |

GAMES INDUSTRY CATEGORIES

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| (13) BEST AD | |
| (14) BEST DEVELOPMENT TEAM | |
| (15) BEST SOFTWARE HOUSE | |

ADDRESS ALL ENTRIES TO: GOLDEN JOYSTICKS 1997. PLAYSTATION PLUS, 37-39 MILLHARBOUR, ISLE OF DOGS, LONDON. E14 9TZ.

Progress Report

The PlayStation scene changes more often than a girl getting ready to go out on the pull. Keep abreast of the ever-changing face of Sony videogaming with this month's update.

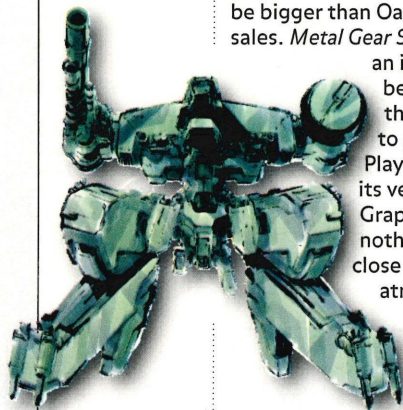
Metal Gear Solid

IN LAST MONTH'S PLUS WE claimed *Metal Gear Solid* was the only game that's more attractive than a troupe of half-naked showgirls. This month we reckon it's gonna be bigger than Oasis' record sales. *Metal Gear Solid* really is

an impressive beast, and is the first game to push the PlayStation to its very limits. Graphically nothing comes close to the slick, atmospheric presentation, as hero Solid Snake sneaks

through the shadows of an enemy nuclear base.

The game is being devel-



oped by Konami in Tokyo, Japan, by the team who created the first *Metal Gear* on the MSX in 1987. Obviously the PlayStation game will be different from the original, although the concept is pretty much the same. In this game stealth is a much more powerful weapon than brawn, as Snake infiltrates the base using the darkness of ventilation shafts for cover rather than running through the front gate, all guns blazing.

Firefights are still a big part of the game though, and Snake is often involved in

heated gun battles with enemy soldiers. These are spectacular, the explosions and muzzle flare looking particularly impressive thanks to fantastic use of lighting.

At present there is no playable demo of the game available so quite how it will play remains to be seen. However, many of the scenes are reminiscent of *Resident Evil* in that action is viewed from set cameras which automatically switch as the player runs from one area to the next, and Konami liken the gameplay to that of the gory classic. Other sections adopt



a first-person perspective though, for sniping and using binoculars for planning your assault, so *Metal Gear Solid* really is a mixed bag of game styles. Whatever, it's still a going to be a biggie when it's released next year. You'll hear more when we do...

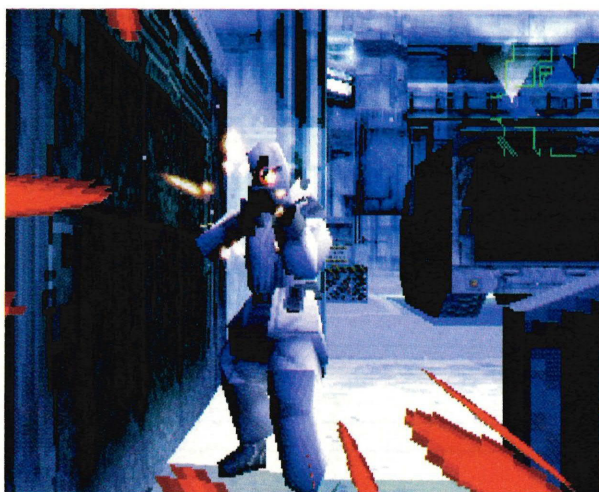
Perfect Assassin

AFTER SITTING OUT THE QUIET summer months, Grolier Interactive has at last unveiled more of its science fiction adventure. As Charon, the perfect assassin, the aim of the game is to hunt down an alien named UI D'Grak, by exploring the environment and talking to the various indigenous life-forms. While pronouncing the evil git's name is hard enough, taking out his minions is much harder.

In addition to combat there are stacks of puzzles to solve plus a massive alien world to discover. Find out more in next month's preview.



SHOOT FIRST, ASK QUESTIONS LATER. THAT'S HOW CYBORG SOLDIER CHARON DEALS WITH ENEMIES IN PERFECT ASSASSIN.



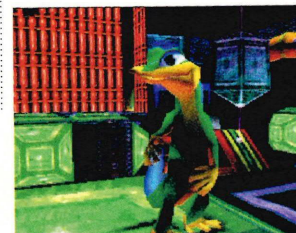
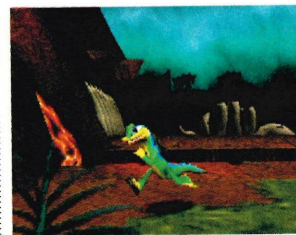
Gex: Enter the Gecko

GEX: ENTER THE GECKO IS progressing very nicely indeed. We've had the chance to play an early version of the game and can report that not only does it look extremely good, but it plays well too. It's a 3D platformer in the style of *Mario 64*, with Gex free to wander in pretty much any direc-

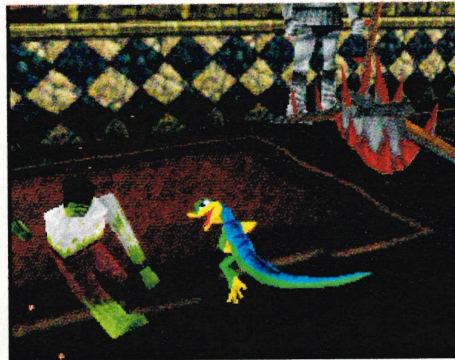
tion he wants. Like the original the game is set in Media Dimension, a bizarre realm where classic movie scenes go crazy, dragging poor old Gex into the nightmare. The 3D environment is extremely detailed and atmospheric, and moves with surpris-

ing fluidity.

Gex can climb vertical surfaces and can even clamber upside down to reach the next bit of a level. In doing so the entire world smoothly rotates around him as he crawls up cliff faces and underneath ledges. It's mind-blowing stuff, and a real showcase for the PlayStation. BMG is hoping for a Christmas release.



OKAY, SO THE FIRST GAME WAS CRAP BUT GIVE THE POOR GUY A CHANCE. GEX: ENTER THE GECKO ALREADY LOOKS FANTASTIC.



Special Ops: US Army Rangers

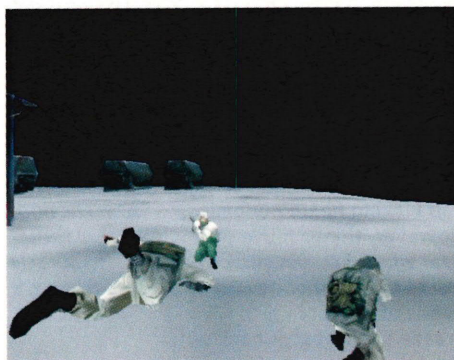
SINCE LAST MONTH'S LOOK AT *Special Ops*, US developer Zombie has been working on the artificial intelligence of the six battle buddies that accompany the player during each sortie. The mission line-up has also been confirmed, with five campaigns (divided into four sub-assignments) crammed into the game. Players are dumped behind enemy lines and must hunt down their objective, bagging any bad guys that get in the way. In-game presentation is tasty,



with some pretty cool character animation provided by an ex-marine. The level of realism is further enhanced by the vehicles and combat uniforms, all of which have been based on the real thing.

The game switches between a first and third-person perspective view, but is by no means a straightforward shoot 'em

up. Instead the player must use strategy to infiltrate enemy lines, picking off individual troops rather than taking on an entire army single-handed. Those looking for a quick blast should use caution then - *Special Ops* is a shoot 'em up, but it's also game that requires just as much brain power as trigger-finger reflexes.



Fighting Force

CORE DESIGN'S 3D FIGHTER IS going through the final stages of development, and will enter testing within the next couple of weeks. It's looking very smart indeed, the presentation and game-

play honed since it was previewed back in issue 21.

Fighting Force now has a solid feel to it, the punches and kicks hitting with a satisfying crunch. But while it may be a laugh to play in the short term, the game's longevity is still questionable. Check out the Plus low-down in next month's full review.



Formula 1 '97

ALL THE CIRCUITS HAVE NOW BEEN crammed into *Formula 1 '97* which is currently being fine-tweaked and nearing its final stages. The game has yet to be optimised and so is suffering from slow-down and pop-up, the background graphics suddenly appearing on-screen rather than fading into view, for example. This will change, obviously, so the game will run at a much smoother frame rate by the time it's released.

PSYGNOSIS IS PUTTING THE FINAL TOUCHES ON FORMULA 1 '97 RIGHT NOW. WATCH OUT FOR THE REVIEW NEXT MONTH.



Psygnosis has also confirmed that *Formula 1 '97* will not support link play, opting instead for a split-screen mode which will run as fast as the one-player game but at the sacrifice of detail.

The arcade mode is currently being tweaked so the game plays more like *Ridge Racer* than a full-blown simulation. The grand prix mode, however, is completely the opposite and should only be tackled by experts. With damage and realism levels switched on it's all too easy to wreck your car on the first corner, but survive and it's



even harder to avoid being black-flagged and disqualified from the race.

The circuit line-up is now finalised, with Estoril replaced by Jerez for the European grand prix at the end of the season. The other circuits have also been reworked in high-resolution, so *Formula 1 '97* should look fantastic when it's reviewed in next month's issue. Stay tuned.



Buggy

OFF-ROAD RACING TAKES A novel twist with Gremlin's radio-controlled car game, *Buggy*. Early versions of the game were promising and now the game is at Alpha stage it's obvious how the final version will play. It's more of a fun arcade game than a simulation, with six off-road buggies bouncing around 16 diverse dirt tracks. Loads of hidden cars have been squeezed in for the skilled gamer to hunt down, plus bonuses and power-ups to improve the performance of each car, while the split-screen mode is perfect for head-to-head tussles. Watch out for *Buggy* around Christmas time.

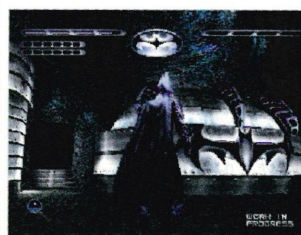


Air Race

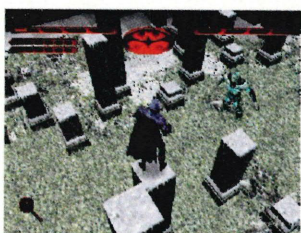
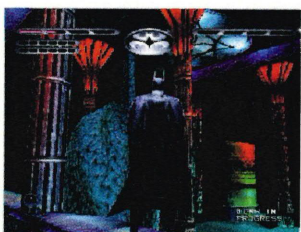
AIR RACE HAS JUST BEEN released in Japan under the guise of *Recipro Heat 5000*, and will appear in the States in the next few weeks following the translation of in-game text. PAL code is a couple of weeks later and so will be reviewed next issue.



Batman & Robin

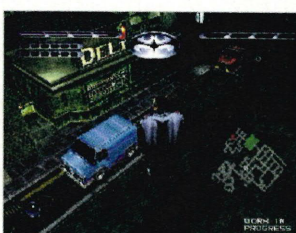


HERE'S THE LATEST ON BATMAN & ROBIN. After the atrocity that was the movie, the game is actually looking pretty nice. Playing as either Batsy, Robin or Batgirl, Mr Freeze is on the



rampage and must be stopped. It's a 3D adventure set across a typically bleak Gotham City, with the triumphant trio using a spectacular array of weapons and goodies to fight their ice-cold opponent.

The game is approaching preview stage and is therefore still quite shaky, but the basic gameplay elements are already up and running.



Much of it is spent exploring Gotham's streets, punching and kicking nearby enemies. However, things move up a gear when Batman climbs inside the Batmobile and heads off in search of Freeze's chamber. Check out the full preview next issue.

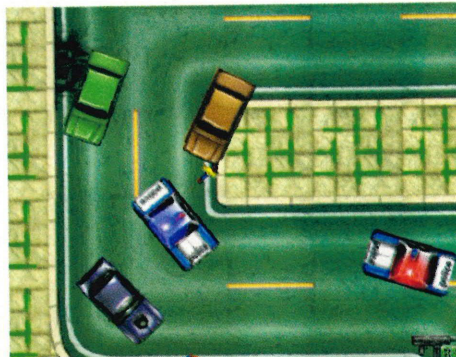
PLAY AS EITHER OF THE DYNAMIC DUO, OR ALTERNATIVELY SLIP INTO BATGIRL'S RUBBER SUIT.

Grand Theft Auto

THE FINISHING TOUCHES ARE currently being added to the PC version of *Grand Theft Auto*. The PlayStation code is already up and running, and should be ready for release this Autumn. For the uninitiated the game is simple in concept. As part of a criminal gang your job is to steal a car, then use it to complete one of the countless missions served up by your boss. Any car can be stolen - from all of

the three fully operational cities featured in the game - which can then be resprayed to keep the cops off your tail.

Visually the game is a far cry from the 3D feasts we're used to on the PlayStation. However, it's great fun to play and proves incredibly addictive, and that's only the early demo version! If the final game's half as good as this, *Grand Theft Auto* is sure-fire winner.



Armoured Core

ARMOURED CORE IS A GAME OF

battling robots, a sort of futuristic gladiators with geared-up combat droids kicking the shit out of each other with missiles and plasma blasters. The one-player game is objective-based, running through a variety of levels, tackling enemy robots and bagging 'bot ass to progress to the next stage. With the cash earned from each successful mission the combat droids can be customised, bolting on larger guns, thicker armour and more advanced sensor systems. These are essential for the tougher missions, but are also the key to the hectic split-screen game. After all, the robot with the biggest missile is going to be the last one standing.



Nagano Winter Olympics

MORE NEWS ON KONAMI'S 'Track and Field on ice'. A handful of events have been confirmed, including speed-skating, the ski-jump and the downhill. Figure skating is also under consideration. The game takes inspiration from International *Track & Field*, but is obviously based on a much more advanced engine. Therefore the 3D graphics



FANCY A BIT OF TRACK & FIELD ON ICE? YOU BETCHA!



will be a lot more detailed and the motion-captured animation smoother.

It's the gameplay that's undergone the biggest revamp though. While some events are pure button-bash-



ers, others like speed-skating require much more technique. Buttons must be tapped in rhythm with the skaters otherwise they'll fall flat on their face.

The game will be released to tie in with the Winter Olympics, so it won't see the light of day until next year. Until then feast on these sumptuous screenshots.

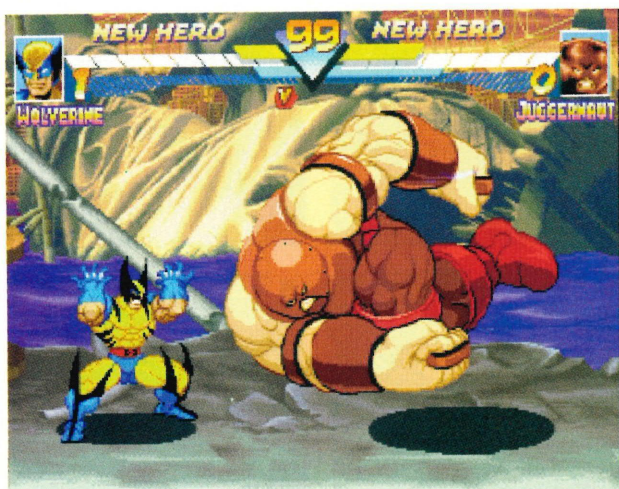
LETHAL & IRRESISTIBLE

LABA CROFT





Marvel
Super Heroes



right, all you naysayers can piss off home right now.

That's right, you who gave the PlayStation stick for supposedly not being able to handle big-ass sprite beat 'em ups. You who said the non-release of *X-Men*:

Children of the Atom was because the machine might be great at 3D, but with big 2D games it just couldn't cut it. All you Saturn owners, basically.

Well ya boo sucks, because here comes *Marvel Super Heroes* and guess what? It's a big-ass sprite beat 'em up. And look! It's 2D.

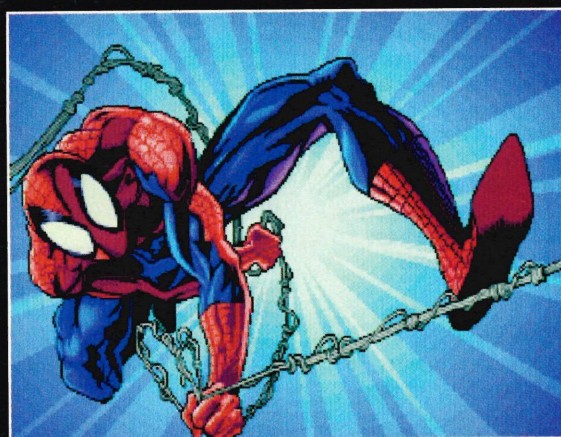
In case you're allergic to arcades, this is a coin-op conversion featuring some well-known Marvel characters – as well as some more obscure ones – in a battle royal. We got an exclusive look at an early version of the game which is not only set to be one of the year's hottest games but bound to have any comics or beat 'em up fan in a drooling frenzy. And if you're into both, you'll be drowning in your own saliva. Urrgh.

Release : TBA
Company : VIRGIN
Price : TBA
Players : 1-2
Genre : BEAT 'EM UP



UP IN THE SKY

Marvel Super Heroes (hereafter referred to as *MSH*) is an enhancement of *X-Men: Children of the Atom*'s characters and moves, which in turn borrowed from the *Street Fighter Alpha* games. The result is an epic beat 'em up which kicked arse in the arcades and could do the same on the PlayStation. This is mainly due to three things:



THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

OH EASY, EVERYONE KNOWS THIS ONE.

Yes the whole "Peter Parker gets bitten by radioactive spider and gets arachnid-like powers" has been well documented.

IS HE THE SAME IN THE GAME AS THE COMIC?

He's certainly as agile as his comic counterpart, and has a range of web-slinging moves. Unfortunately though, he can't walk on walls. But apart from that he's a very faithful conversion.

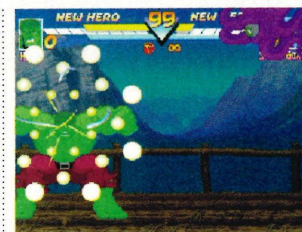
MOST LIKELY TO SAY:

"Showtime!" or "Spider-sense tingling!"

THE ULTRA-POWERFUL INFINITY MOVES ARE PRECEDED BY BALLS OF ENERGY SURROUNDING THE CHARACTER IN QUESTION.

The new additions to an old genre, the Marvel licence and, of course, some great-looking graphics.

Gameplay initially looks very similar to *Street Fighter*, *Darkstalkers* and virtually every Capcom beat 'em up ever made. Attacks are performed with three buttons for kick and three for punch, split into light, medium and hard strengths. Special moves



COMICS AND VIDEOGAMES.

Videogame adaptations of comic characters have a long and mostly ugly history. For years they've been seen as a way to make money by name recognition, and the quality of the game itself has been a secondary concern. Things look like they're improving though, with some upcoming titles which will finally do comic characters justice. So here's a selection of the best and worst, and some upcoming titles.

ROGUE'S GALLERY

We could fill a whole magazine with all the bad superhero games on other formats, so it's quite lucky we only have four (at the moment). But bad they truly are...

BATMAN FOREVER:

Acclaim were responsible for this dire film licence, which suffered from being yet another *Final Fight*-style beat 'em up Batman game, as well as having crap game-play and worse graphics.



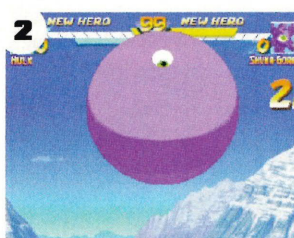
IRON MAN/X-O MANOWAR:

Possibly the worst comics-to-videogame transfer in the history of mankind, this is an incredibly dull Iron Man game which received 22% from PlayStation Plus when it was first released.



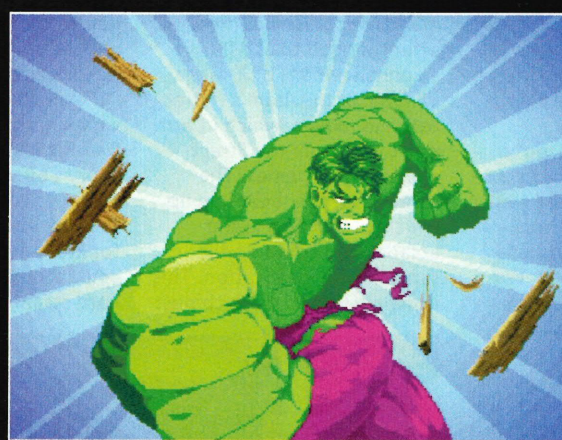
THE INCREDIBLE HULK:

The Pantheon Saga: Not at the same depths as *Iron Man*, but not at *Marvel Super Heroes* level by any means.



WHO'S THAT GREEN GEEZER ANYWAY?

One of the great attractions of *Marvel Super Heroes* is that instead of playing as some sort of hastily made-up fictional character, you are in fact a fictional character with loads of history behind it. Who wouldn't want to swing through the air like Spider-Man, or get all primal as the savage Hulk himself? For anyone who isn't fully genned-up on the superhero scene (and if so, which rock have you been hiding under?) then, starting from page 21, here's a little round-up of the eight characters in the game so far.



THE INCREDIBLE HULK

WHO IS THAT GREEN SKINNED BLOKE?

The Incredible Hulk, the strongest man on the planet, and as you so rightly pointed out, he's in possession of a bit of a pea-green tan.

HOW'D HE END UP LIKE THAT THEN?

Well, his alter ego is a scientist called Bruce Banner who was caught in the blast of his own gamma bomb. The radiation caused him to change into the savage Hulk whenever he got angry. But over the years he's gone through many mutations, including being a Hulk with the mind of Bruce Banner, turning grey and being evil, and even changing back to Banner when he gets mad.

IS HE THE SAME IN THE GAME AS HE IS IN THE COMIC?

Well, he's certainly the strongest character in the game, rivalled only by Juggernaut. But to be honest, if his strength was at his comic levels, one punch would probably take Spider-Man's head off...

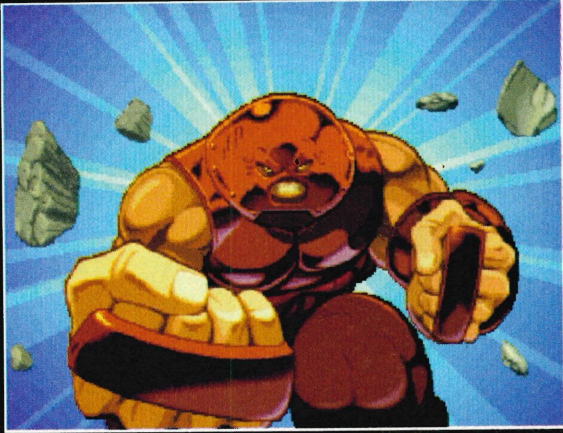
MOST LIKELY TO SAY:

"Let's rock!" or "Who's next?"

are activated with the familiar *Street Fighter* Dpad movements and are based around each character's super powers, with Spider-Man able to fire web lines and Captain America tossing his shield around. By pressing different attack buttons when activating a projectile, some characters can aim their shots up and down as well as horizontally. And since these shots can be fired in mid-air, it creates the possibility for some great flying fights. Blocks and throws can also be performed while off the ground and, thanks to *MSH's* super jump system, this means there's as much action in the air as on the floor.

The super jump is a feature from the *X-Men:COTA* game and makes combat very spectacular indeed. Each stage is two screens tall, so heroes can leap into the air for mad





JUGGERNAUT

LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT - No helmet jokes please. If you must know, the reason for the mad headgear is to give this evil mutant protection from psychic attack. Because he's so bloody huge and strong it's his only weak spot. One of the X-Men's foes since the early days, Juggy is, as Ice-T would no doubt say, "one tough mutha".

IS HE SAME IN'T GAME AS HE IS IN'T COMICS? He's a big strong git with a silly hat, so yes, the same.

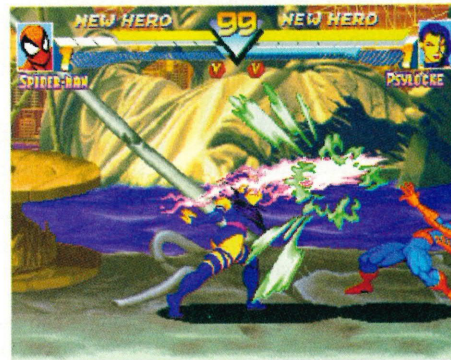
MOST LIKELY TO SAY: "I'm unstoppable."

mid-air battles. If one fighter decides to stay on the ground, the screen follows the progress of the leaping player, showing the position of the other with an icon on the bottom of the screen so attacks can be planned. This adds an extra dimension to the battle, as well as a cool kung-fu movie feel which makes for battles which truly capture the feel of the comic.

TO INFINITY... AND BEYOND!

As well as normal and special moves, each character has their own Infinity Move (or moves in some cases) - a devastating super attack. These are the MSH equivalent to the *Street Fighter Alpha* Super

combos and are at their most impressive when used to finish an opponent. The screen flashes at the moment of the fatal blow and the name of the move is shown on the screen. These attacks can't be performed willy-nilly though since they need power, which is built up on an energy bar. Energy is increased by performing attacks and, once the bar has been filled, an Infinity Move can be used. It can be topped up three times, so a trio of super moves can be pulled off in quick succession to crush and humiliate your opponent. These moves are also based on the characters' powers, so Iron Man whips out an energy beam cannon,



THOUGH WE LOVE PSYLOCKE AND ARE NOT SEX-IST IN ANY WAY, SHE SURE IS ONE SNEAKY BEEVITCH. PROOF OF THIS CAN BE SEEN IN THE SEQUENCE TO THE LEFT, AS SHE TELE-PORTS OUT OF HARM'S WAY BEFORE LAND-ING A RIGHT SMACKER ON GOOD OLD SPIDEY, WHO KIND OF DESERVES IT FOR STANDING THERE LIKE A PLANK.

FIGHTS ARE MADE MORE SPECTACULAR, AND DARE WE SAY 'COMIC BOOK' IN STYLE BY THE BIG FLASHES WHICH ACCOMPANY POWERFUL ATTACKS.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

HARD BOILED:

Reviewed in this very issue, *Hard Boiled* manages to not only be a game which bears no resemblance to anything in the comic, but crap as well.



UP AND COMING



FANTASTIC FOUR:

Once again, in this issue, this is another Probe/Acclaim super hero game, featuring Mr Fantastic, the Thing and the rest in some four-player fighting fun.

X-MEN VS STREET FIGHTER:

If you've ever wondered whether Ryu's harder than Wolverine (and if you have then you've got too much time on your hands) then this will be the game to settle the argument. Super Heroes vs *Street Fighter* characters. Nuff said. Apart from the rumoured four players on screen at once of course.

X-MEN: CHILDREN OF THE ATOM:

The prequel to *Marvel Super Heroes*, this has members of everyone's favourite mutant team taking on some of their classic enemies. Quite why this is coming out when *Marvel Super Heroes* and *X-Men vs Street Fighter* are meant to be superior sequels is beyond us.

BATMAN AND ROBIN:

A good Batman game? By Acclaim? Yes, it's true. Developer Probe, responsible for the trilogies *Alien* and *Die Hard*, has turned its attentions to the Dark Knight himself. Thank God.

SUPERMAN:

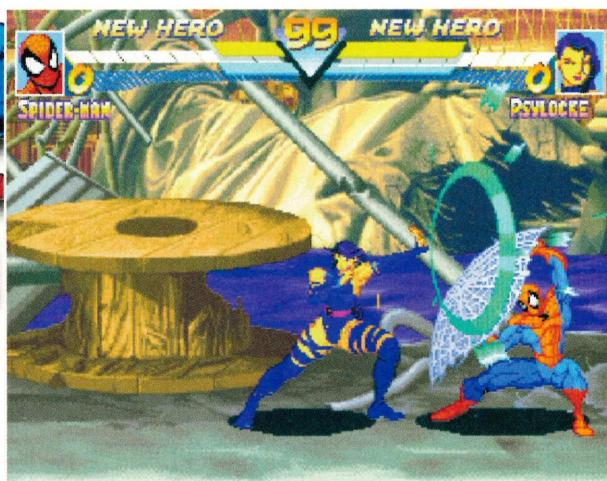
Superman has always been the hero to fare pretty badly on the videogame front but hopefully this next offering will be better. Based on the *Superman Adventures* cartoon, it should offer some 3D thrills as Supes flies round Metropolis fighting Lex Luthor and trying to rescue Lois Lane.



and Wolverine goes into a claw-slashing frenzy, with everything looking very epic indeed. Amazingly, these aren't the only special powers in the game, because *MSH* offers something never before seen in any Capcom beat 'em up – the infinity gems.

LITTLE GEMS

Since the purpose of the game is to get hold of the infinity gems, they appear in the hands of opponents or thrown onto the ground at random during the battle. Enemies can also be made to drop gems by hitting them particularly hard. Any gems in the hands of the enemy will be yours once you've won the battle, so you'll be



powered up for the next stage. The six gems have different effects like speeding up movement or giving extra protection, and while each character can use them all, they all have their own special power gem. In the case of Hulk, say, the Time gem helps by making him incredibly fast, and for Psylocke the Power gem creates two more fearsome Psylockes who can also attack!

BEGONE NAYSAYERS!

The result of all these features means *MSH's* gameplay looks very tasty indeed. And full marks to Capcom. Indeed, it's especially satisfying since people have been saying the machine couldn't handle the large sprites needed to make the game work ever since *X-Men: Children Of The Atom* got canned.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26



CAPTAIN AMERICA

BIT OF A PATRIOT IS HE?

Just a touch. (Cue gravelly film trailer voice) Steve Rodgers was just a regular American soldier, until he volunteered for a secret military experiment which increased his physical prowess to almost superhuman levels. Now, armed with his indestructible shield, he defends his country as...(drum roll) Captain America!

REALLY? SO NOT JUST A NUTTER IN TIGHTS THEN?

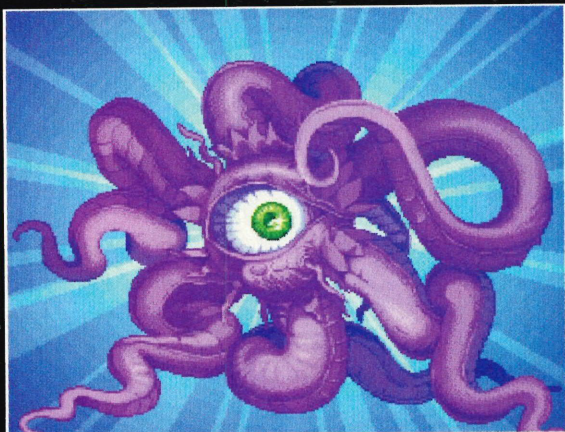
Not at all, he is a bit out of place though since he was frozen in 1945 and then revived in the present to continue his fight for justice.

IS HE THE SAME AS HE IS IN THE COMIC?

Very similar. While he can throw his shield like a boomerang, if he doesn't catch it he has to do without until he can pick it up. Moveswise he's a bit of a Ryu/Ken type character, except his attacks aren't so outlandish.

MOST LIKELY TO SAY:

"Freedom prevails" or "Thumbs up soldier!"



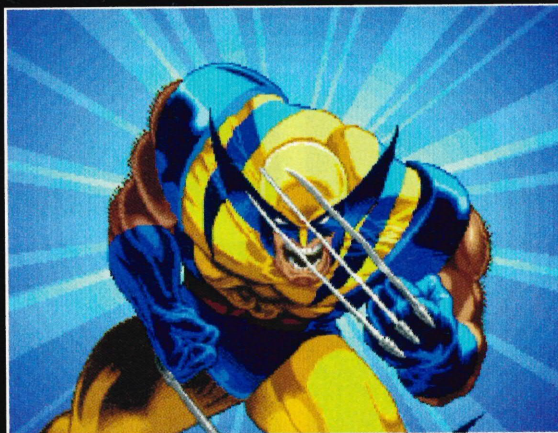
SHUMA-GORATH

WHO'S THIS? OR MORE PRECISELY, WHAT? Bugged if we know. He wasn't in the Infinity Wars comics, but apparently used to make guest appearances in Dr Strange.

APART FROM LOOKING LIKE VOMIT, WHAT ARE HIS POWERS? Old Shuma is a bit of a mighty morphin' wonder, able to turn his tentacled form to any shape he wants. This means lots of mad shapes and attacks, and thoughts of 'if he doesn't have hands or feet, so what's punch and kick got to do with it'.

MOST LIKELY TO SAY:

Some sort of gurgling thing that's hard to make out.



WOLVERINE

STRANGE LOOKING BLOKE. WHAT'S HE ABOUT THEN?

Wolverine is an X-Man, and one of the most popular characters around. He's a mutant with an accelerated healing rate, which helped when he was operated on and given an indestructible metal skeleton and claws (ouch).

HOW CLOSE IS THE VIDEOGAME VERSION TO THE COMIC?

Very close, actually. When he takes damage, half of it is healed, effectively doubling the size of his energy bar. His claws also figure heavily in his attacks, the only discrepancy being that since his claws can cut through anything he could shred everyone in seconds.

MOST LIKELY TO SAY:

"Let's go bub!"

RE-LIVE THOSE SPIDER-MAN FANTASIES NOW! SPIDER-MAN, SPIDER-MAN, DOES WHATEVER A SPIDER CAN! IS HE TOUGH LISTEN BUD, HE'S GOT RADIOACTIVE BLOOD!



SPIDER-MAN SWINGS INTO ACTION!
...SPIDER SENSE TINGLING!



SUDDENLY...

EAT CLAW, BUB!



BUT THE MIGHTY MUTANT UNLEASHES A BERSERKER BARRAGE WITH HIS CLAWS.

SPIDEY PROVES HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SWING ON WEBS!



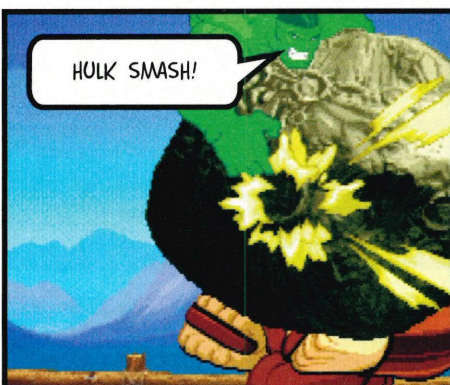
WHAT'S WRONG WOLVIE? FEELING DIZZY?

IRON MAN TARGETS HIS PROTON CANNON ON PSYLOCKE...



PREPARE TO FEEL THE POWER OF SUPERIOR TECH!

HULK SMASH!



MEANWHILE... THE INCREDIBLE HULK CLASHES WITH THE MIGHTY JUGGERNAUT. WITNESS THE POWER OF GREEN SKIN'S GAMMA CRUSH!



JUGGY HITS BACK WITH HIS MIGHTY EARTHQUAKE MOVE!

EAT THAT YOU PURPLE PANT WEARING FREAK! THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR GRAB-BING MY HELMET!



THE PREVIEW VERSION WE GOT OUR MUCKY PAWS ON ONLY HAD TWO BACK-GROUNDS, BUT THE FINISHED GAME WILL HAVE ONE FOR ALL THE CHARACTERS, INCLUDING TWO BIG BOSS-ES, MAKING FOR A MAMMOTH... TWELVE.



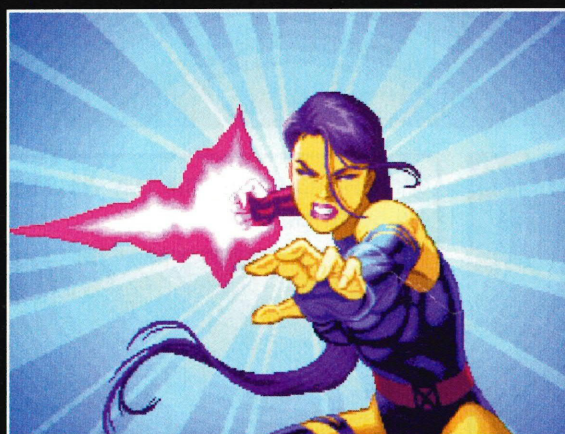
But this time it seems there's nothing to fear. The version of the game PlayStation Plus saw had eight of the ten selectable characters working which – bar a few missing animation frames – looked almost identical to the arcade version.

Currently missing from the battles are Magneto the master of magnetism, and Blackheart, a large character who isn't well known in the comics at all. The two bosses are also missing, so Doctor Doom and Thanos were nowhere to be seen. That

said, the current version is cool in terms of both graphics and speed. While Spider-Man and Psylocke moved at a fair speed, even huge characters like Hulk and Juggernaut were looking good. It's also yet to be seen whether the level backgrounds will be as

well animated as the arcade machine, which added a huge amount to the proceedings.

But, whatever the finished result, if it even slightly betters what we've seen so far then we're in for a rare old treat when Virgin releases the game later this year.

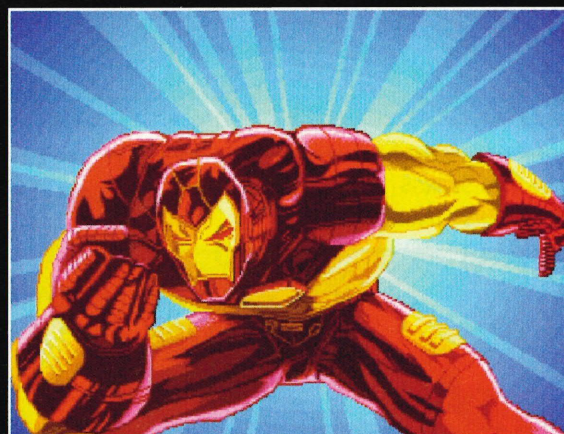


PSYLOCKE

VA VA VOOM. PHWOAR. DON'T GET MANY OF THOSE TO THE POUND. ETC. Originally Psylocke looked nothing like this. When she first made her appearance in comics, this X-Men member was Captain Britain's dowdy-looking mentally powered sister. Her popularity soon soared though once she'd been ninja'd up and made to wear a leotard.

HOW CLOSE TO THE COMIC IS HER VIDEOGAME PERSONA? Pretty good actually. Her mad martial arts skills make her a bit of a Chun-Li character, and her mental powers make for good special and infinity moves. However, in the game she can teleport, which is bollocks, 'cos she can't do that in the comics.

MOST LIKELY TO SAY (IN A HUSKY SEXY VOICE): "Come on."
WHAT SHE SHOULD SAY: "Stop looking at my tits!"



IRON MAN

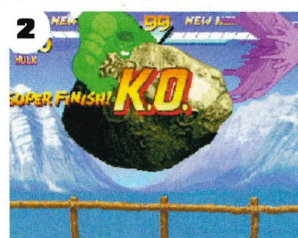
WHO IS THAT MASKED MAN? Why, it's Tony Stark, millionaire and all-round superhero courtesy of an armoured suit of his own creation.

WHAT DOES THAT LET HIM DO? The standard flight and superstrength, as well as some nifty hidden projectile weapons including a big beam that shoots out of his chest.

HOW CLOSE IS HIS VIDEOGAME PORTRAYAL TO THAT OF HIS COMIC-BOOK COUNTERPART? Pretty close really. Obviously he can't fly as well as he does in the books otherwise no one would be able to catch him, so it's understandably been toned down.

MOST LIKELY TO SAY:
"Superior Tech!" (smug git)

HULK'S GAMMA CRUSH IN ALL ITS SPRITE-DRAWN GLORY. NOT ONLY POWERFUL, BUT COOL AS WELL.



"...EXCELLENT GRAPHICAL CONTENT.
GAMEPLAY IS IMPRESSIVE"

[EDGE JULY '97]

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Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown

DUKE NUKEM IS THE LOGICAL STEP UP FROM DOOM. A FULLY-3D ENVIRONMENT WITH ROOMS STACKED ON ROOMS, SCI-FI STORYLINE AND BIG COMEDY VALUE MADE IT A PC HIT.

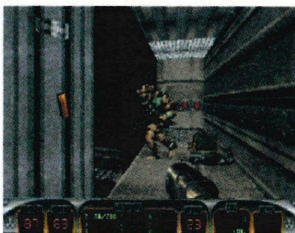
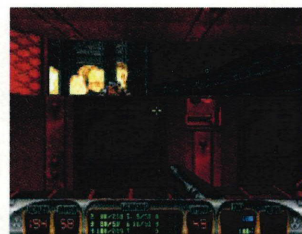
In the beginning there was *Doom*, and it was good. Bloody good actually. Across the planet, gamers gasped at the amazing depth and quality of 3D graphics that made this title a real milestone. Not an easy act to follow we all thought, but then came *Duke Nukem 3D*. Admittedly not as fresh and innovative as *Doom*, this 'clone' was arguably more playable and injected genuinely amusing moments into proceedings. It also dragged the genre into full 3D, with rooms on top of rooms. A year later and a ver-

sion for the PlayStation is up and running. Almost identical to the PC original but with extra levels, PlayStation Plus was given an early look at the first couple of episodes of *Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown*.

ALIEN LANDINGS

Murderous, blood-thirsty aliens have landed in Los Angeles and the human race has discovered it's now on the endangered species list and running out of time.

That's it really for the storyline, other than to say only one man can save the world, and all the women contained therein, from the attack. That man just happens to be you, Duke Nukem. Belt through



Release : NOVEMBER
Company : GT
Price : £44.99
Players : 1
Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP



SECRETS

Much of the depth of Duke Nukem's gameplay comes from the secrets dotted about every level. Posters, signs, air vents, display shelves all conceal areas. When gas canisters and fire extinguishers are shot, the resultant blast blows holes into hidden sections.

On the first episode alone eight secret places are accessible, so you can imagine how many are contained within the entire game. Somehow programmers have managed to dream up lots and lots of different ways of hiding secrets, so finding them all is an enormous challenge.



three episodes, and a load of special PlayStation-only sections, blasting extraterrestrial scum into lots of pieces.

Part one of the epic is a real baptism of fire called L.A. Meltdown. Packed with camouflaged aliens and pig cops it kicks off with Duke landing on top of a skyscraper and wandering around a cinema (a red light district) complete with peep shows, demolition sites, an

underground base with a docked submarine and another seven areas in the first episode alone. Everything comes to a head at a launch facility where Duke has to destroy Apollo 13 before it can take off.

After completing the earth-bound sections, including bosses, it's off to the moon with you for a series of alien lunar base adventures. Entrance is gained through a

spaceport and two new kinds of enemy quickly turn up, a beaky creature called an Enforcer that drops down from ceilings and a floating security android. Shuttles move Duke between space stations which contain incubators, a fusion station, reactors, more new types of alien scum, boss monsters and there's even a special appearance by a miniature 2001 monolith.

Having dispatched a truckload of ugly buggers, Duke touches back down on Earth for the concluding episode. Highlights include the ability to step up to a karaoke mike, a flooded zone which has to be swum through, an area that gets hit by earth

tremors, a fabulous movie set and an underground network with subway trains to avoid. Aside from all these levels, Duke Nukem's PlayStation incarnation also contains a bunch of top secret secret missions which are quite unlike any of the standard ones.



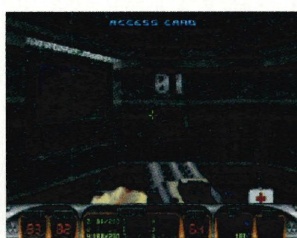
KILLER
Gameplay is similar to *Doom*, in that the

basic idea is to run around levels, finding secrets, picking up keys and working out fairly straightforward puzzles. However, describing the game like that doesn't do it justice. There's a charm to *Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown* made up from lots of little details that themselves seem inconsequential

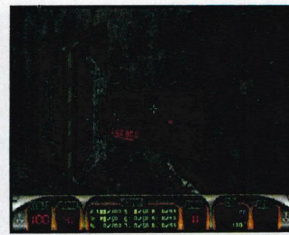
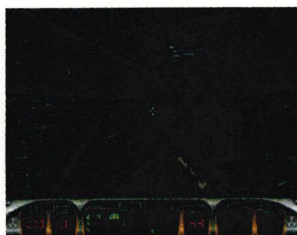
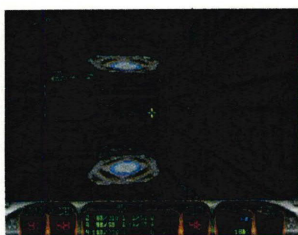
THINK YOU'VE SEEN THIS KIND OF CORRIDOR ACTION BEFORE? WELL MAYBE, BUT DUKE IS A CLASSIC.



DUKE NUKEM: TOTAL MELTDOWN NEVER SHYS AWAY FROM BIG EXPLOSIONS.



(RIGHT)
TELEPORTS,
SECRET AREAS,
FALSE WALLS,
NETWORKS OF
DUCTING MAKE
DUKE A
COMPLICATED
CHALLENGE.



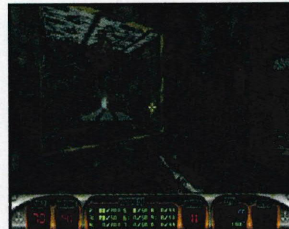
most of the time. Duke is armed not only with bags of devastating and well thought through weaponry, but also with – gasp – a personality. Some of his catchphrases, which are delivered with a Snake Plissken-like husky voice, are taken from cult horror flick *The Evil Dead*. When our hero is confronted by strippers his reaction is to grab money from his pocket and shout, “shake it baby”. It’s also possible to get Duke to whip out the old John Thomas and relieve his bustin’ bladder.

Because development teams were swapped halfway through the PlayStation *Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown* project, programmers will only get a total of six months to complete the game (at present there’s just a month left on that calendar). On the other hand, teams working

on versions for the Saturn and N64 were given an entire year to complete the project. Despite this setback GT is confident the PlayStation version will be an accurate PC conversion, with a whole load more slapped on top.

Transparencies are going to be included, new speech will be added, all characters are being re-rendered to make them less blocky, and sounds and music are getting remix treatment.

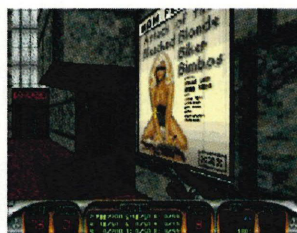
Then there are the PlayStation-specific levels, which are so large programmers are describing them as a fourth episode. At present details of these sections are hush-hush, but your investigative PlayStation Plus reporters have learnt there will be plenty of tongue-in-cheek references to films and videogames and new bosses will be included.



GOODIES

When 3D realms designed *Duke Nukem* they really went to town on items to pick up. The game is littered with items, some of which are utilised when touched, others stored in an inventory. A variety of medipacks, atomic health boosters and armour help Duke survive, and jetpacks, night-vision goggles, steroids, protective boots and scuba gear help him reach inaccessible areas. One of the best bits of kit is a holoduke, which projects an image of Duke to fool enemies.

Then there’s the weaponry which ranges from pistols and shotguns to chainguns and rocket propelled grenades. Pipe bombs can be thrown then remotely detonated, while trip bombs attach to walls and emit a laser beam. When the red beams of light are broken the bomb detonates. Even more exotic weaponry comes in the shape of a freeze ray and a shrinker which reduces foe to pint size for a few moments. At this point Duke can just squish scum beneath his boots.



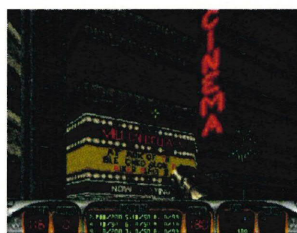
RUMOURS

Now the *Duke Nukem* project is nearing completion, it’s possible to put to rest some scare stories concerning the PlayStation conversion.

- Firstly, nothing will be censored from the game. All blood, guts and gore will be included from the original. To ensure the minds of children remain unwarped, the box will carry an 18 certificate.

- Multi player options are also being programmed using the link cable. Two people will be able to go head to head, and it’s hoped highly intelligent computer controlled players will make the numbers up to eight in death-match mode. Split screen isn’t being used as the game becomes unplayable.

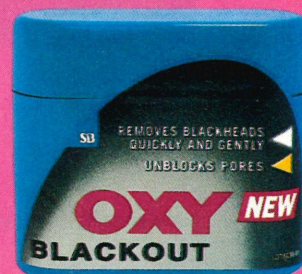
- Controlling Duke with a standard pad is tricky at the moment - so many controls, so few buttons - so it’s a relief to hear Sony’s spanking new analogue pad (see news page 12) will be catered for. If the rumble pad makes it into Europe, this too will be included.



'OXY,' 'OXY BLACKOUT' AND 'OXYCUTE 'EM' ARE TRADE MARKS

our boyfriend never has to
know you pulled
last night.

Oxy Blackout tape lifts out blackheads quickly and gently.



THANKS TO
THE NEW 3D
GRAPHICS,
GREAT CAMERA
ANGLES ARE
NOW A REALITY
FOR STREET
FIGHTER FANS.



Street Fighter EX

plus alpha

1t had to happen. Street Fighter has finally gone 3D. After all the fuss surrounding the three-dimensional fighting likes of *Virtua Fighter*, *Tekken* and friends, everyone assumed *Street Fighter 3* would be the one to have a polygon workout. This wasn't the case, but creator Capcom decided to give the fans what they asked for anyway, so *Street Fighter EX* was born, taking the best of the old characters, adding some brand new ones and presenting the whole thing in lovely three-dimensional polygons. Converted from the superb *Street Fighter EX* coin-op, this



enhanced PlayStation version has everything from the original plus a whole lot more. With 23 playable characters (including four secret ones) each with their own selection of special moves and combos, could this be one of the best fighting games of the year? And does this mean Capcom has the fighting genre well and truly sewn-up?

FIREWORKS
Let's make this absolutely clear right now. This isn't *Tekken*. Nor is it *Soul Blade*, *Star Gladiators* or any other kind of 3D fighting game you've seen on the PlayStation so far. There is no hitting downed opponents, each character has only 10 special moves at most, and only two of the characters



THROWS HAVE BEEN MADE ALL THE MORE IMPRESSIVE AND VARIED IN SFEX.



Release : TBA
Company : VIRGIN
Price : TBA
Players : 1-2
Genre : FIGHTING



THE USE OF INFINITY MOVES LEADS TO SOME TOP LIGHTING EFFECTS AND SOME MAJOR DAMAGE FOR THE VICTIM.

can sidestep. So, the same old *Street Fighter* game in 3D? Not really, there's a lot more to it than that. *SFEX* contains a lot of features from the *Street Fighter Alpha* games, with each character having two or more Alpha moves which can be pulled off once they have enough energy in their Alpha bar.

Attacking and being attacked adds to the bar, and for every third filled, a box appears which can be spent on an Alpha move. These range from predictable attacks such as super fireballs and uppercuts for Ken and Ryu, to massive lightning-fast combos and exotic moves with the other characters. Most of these are accessed by performing simple Dpad movements, and more than one can be linked together in order to create ultra-lethal combinations which result in fantastic lighting effects.

The most complex Alpha moves are the 'firecracker' attacks which are used by characters such as Sakura. A firecracker move is so powerful that when it connects, the screen blanks out to be replaced by explosions. When the end, the user of the firecracker move is seen standing over their fallen opponent, having unleashed a combo so fast and powerful it could not be seen!

These moves, as well as the special attacks each character has, makes the game a constant battle of not only

reactions, but strategy and joypad co-ordination. It also means your thumb will be aching like hell at the end of a big session.

WHO SHALL I BE?

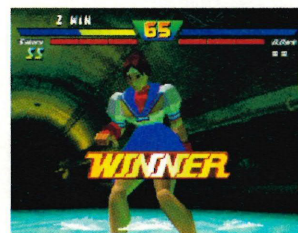
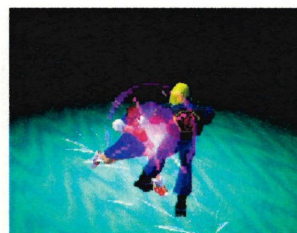
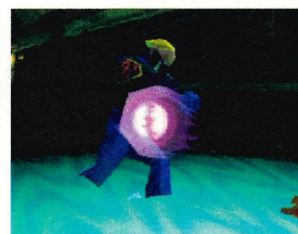
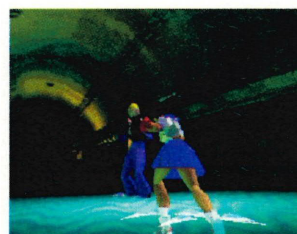
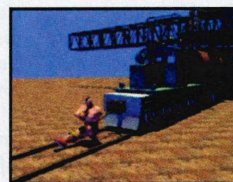
While the *Street Fighter* series has been refining its gameplay as the games have progressed, each one has introduced more and more characters. *SFEX* is no exception, with a staggering 23 characters taking it well into *Tekken 2* territory. These include stalwarts such as Ryu, Ken, Chun Li, Zangief, Guile

and Dhalsim as well as newer characters like Sakura, C. Jack, Hukoto, Garuda and the bizarre halloween-costume-wearing Skullomania (where do they come up with these names?). A few of these are clones of Ken and Ryu, but there's also a selection of four secret characters which sit tantalisingly on the character screen waiting to become available. These include an evil Ryu with devil-red eyes and a cool black costume, an evil version of female aikido warrior Hokuto, and Beta and



IT'S THE RENDER THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT

While each *Street Fighter* game has previously never offered animated cutscenes for characters when they complete the game, with *SFEX*, Capcom has finally joined the 32-bit revolution and included one for each character. But while it's a kick to see a fully rendered Ryu and Chun Li, there are some very strange sequences out there. Guile's shows him standing on top of a fighter plane while in the air, and Zangief's has him doing his cossack dance in some unlikely locations, including pulling a train! I don't know what they're smoking in Japan, but it can't be bad...



ANOTHER FEATURE NEW TO THE STREET FIGHTER SERIES IS THE ACTION REPLAY, WHICH SHOWS THAT FATAL BLOW IN ALL IT'S MULTIPLE CAMERA GLORY. PHWOAR!



THERE'S SOME GREAT MOVES IN SFEX. BLAIR'S SLIDING LEG THROW (BELOW) IS ONE OF THEM.

ZANGIEF'S COME OVER ALL KING FROM TEKKEN, AS YOU CAN SEE IN THIS NUMBERED SEQUENCE, LINKING A BUNCH OF THROWS TOGETHER BEFORE GOING FOR HIS FLYING SPINNING PILEDRIVER.



Gamma who are faceless models with a selection of moves stolen from various characters. Big boss Bison (known as Vega in the Japanese games) is still the man to beat at the end of the game, and has become even more powerful, having had a new teleport move added to his extremely cheesy arsenal. Fortunately, the other fighters have also had their moves enhanced to give them more of an edge and make things even more spectacular.

One of the many differences between *SFEX* and other 3D beat 'em ups is that it contains a whole host of mental special moves, including a lot of projectile attacks. The Namco PlayStation beat 'em ups have avoided this so far, going for a semi-realistic approach. One of the ways this has manifested itself is in the lack of action in the air, with most characters (apart from *Tekken*'s Marshal Law) having little off-ground action. In *SFEX*, about half of

all the attacks take place either from or in the air, which changes tactics significantly and keeps things moving quickly too.

This is also due to the amazing graphics which make the action so fast and furious.

AND YOU CAN SEE SAKURA'S KNICKERS.

Make no mistake, *SFEX* is looking like it's going to be a very speedy mover indeed. The backdrops might only be 2D, but there's so much action going on in the foreground you probably won't notice until you're watching someone else play. Even with all the polygons to shift around, the fights are still as fast as they ever were, and smoother than the proverbial baby's bottom (always thought that was a bit of a worrying metaphor).

And detail hasn't been sacrificed for frame rate either. The level of character detail is such that you can see Chun Li's hair ribbons hanging down when she flips to perform her Spinning Bird Kick, and if you, er, look carefully (not that we did, much) at Sakura's skirt you can see it flapping about very well indeed. Such babe-spotting shenanigans aren't the only plus side of the graphics.

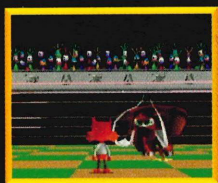
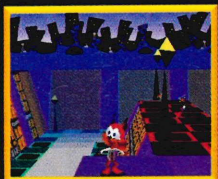


Each attack looks a lot more solid, and combos are a lot more impressive now limbs can be seen swinging about as they hit the hapless enemy. There's also a constant light source, so shadows face the correct way after the camera has moved, instead of always facing in the same direction. What all these little touches add up to is a game which should do

the *Street Fighter* series proud, as well as fill the gaping beat 'em up hole which seems to have been sitting in the Autumn schedules. Capcom of course is also responsible for the *Marvel Super Heroes* (see page 20), and with no competition from Namco likely before Christmas, it looks like having the top end of the fighting market to itself.



"...classic gaming action...an absolute riot!" Total PlayStation



BUBSY 3D

"...a truly inter-dimensional affair"

PLAY MAGAZINE

BUBSY 3D



Publisher: Telstar Fun & Games
The Studio, 62-64 Bridge Street, Walton-On-Thames, Surrey KT12 1AP
Tel: 01932 222232 Fax: 01932 252702
Email: telstar@dial.pipex.com

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HE'S THE LAST
BOY SCOUT,
THE LAST MAN
STANDING, HE
DIES HARD,
READS A LOT
OF PULP
FICTION,
OWNS 12
MONKEYS AND
A HUDSON
HAWK.
WHO IS HE?
ER, DUNNO.
HOW ABOUT A
CLUE?



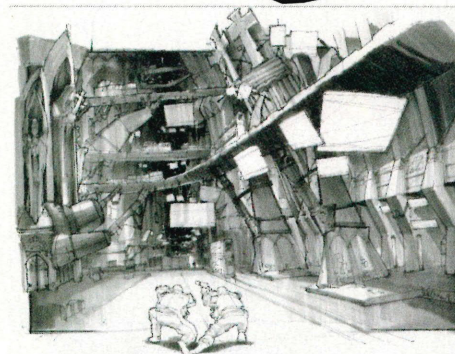
Apocalypse

Strange days indeed. Actors like John Candy and Steve McQueen work respectively in films and commercials long after their death, thanks to computer wizardry. The same kind of techniques allow the makers of Jodie Foster's new film, *Contact*, to include President Clinton in the blockbuster without his permission.

What's next, a major tinsel-town star going completely digital and appearing in a game? Well, yes. Welcome to *Apocalypse*, which boasts one of the biggest, most bankable names in the business.

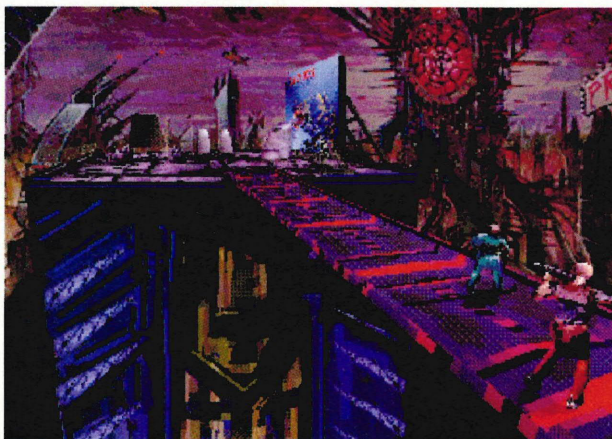
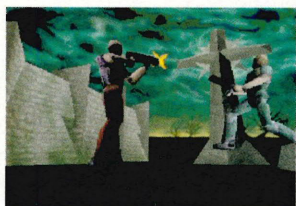
STARRING ROLES

To be completely accurate, this kind of thing has been done before. PlayStation owners have glimpsed Malcolm McDowell and Mark Hamill in *Wing Commander IV*, and a vaguely famous bald bloke was included in the FMV of *Top Gun*. However, Activision's plans for *Apocalypse* are on an entirely different level. Firstly they're

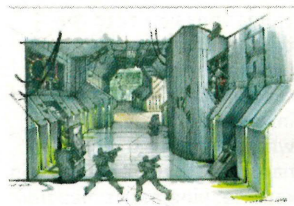
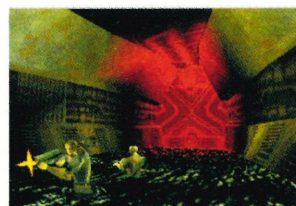
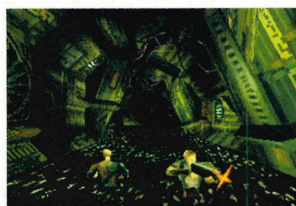
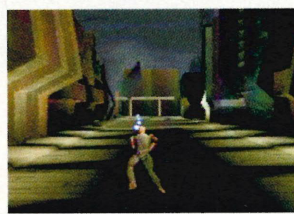
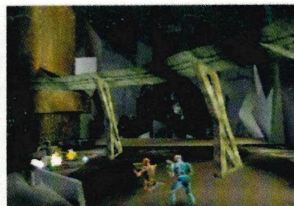
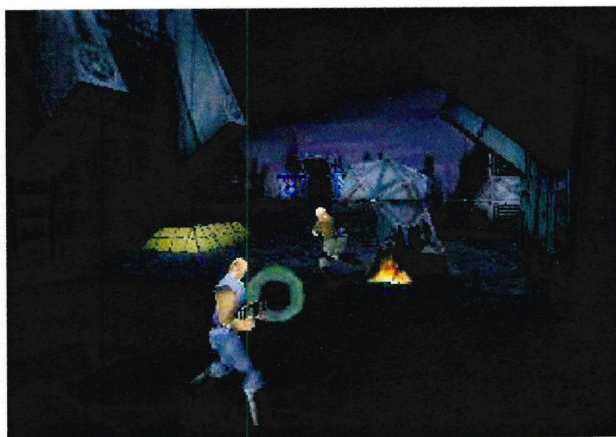


using Bruce Willis, probably one of the biggest cinema stars on the planet. Secondly, Bruce won't be walking into a couple of cutscenes then disappearing

again, oh no. Mr Die Hard has been motion-captured and voice-recorded to act as an interactive sidekick and virtual buddy throughout the entire game.

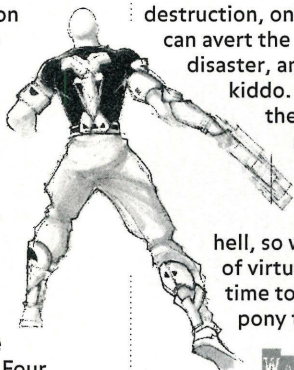


Release : NOVEMBER
Company : ACTIVISION
Price : £44.99
Players : 2
Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP



Here's the story so far. Sometime in the future science and religion have become conflicting forces in society and a man - known only as the Reverend - has combined these opposing philosophies in order to harness the powers of absolute evil. The rottah.

His efforts have brought forth the Four Horsemen of the *Apocalypse*; Death, Plague, War and the Beast (Famine must have gone out for a bite to eat), who now await a signal from the Rev to rain chaos on the world and end humanity.



As is usually the case in situations involving Earth's destruction, only one man can avert the impending disaster, and that's you kiddo. No one but the player's character can spot horse-mounted fellows from hell, so with the help of virtual Bruce it's time to do some pony tracking.

WANDERER

Apocalypse is an isometric, 3D shoot'em up affording players the opportunity to roam anywhere within a variety of generated environments - from weird factories to sinister grave-

yards. Action revolves around Kid, controlled by the player while Willis takes on the role of Trey Kincaid, who acts as back-up firepower throughout the game.

Artificial Intelligence for Trey has been designed to be reactive to the level of competence shown by players, so he'll hang back if it looks as if you're ably taking care of matters, then step in if situations start to hot up.

Generally the game is watched from behind and above the character. But, since this product intends to blur the boundaries between cinema and software, new view angles are being exploited to give action maximum impact. An intelligent camera system offers third person, top-down (vertigo), free-roaming, side-on and tracking views. Activision claim this feature will really increase the immersive quality of the experience and enhance gameplay.

ACTIVATION'S WHAT YOU NEED

Another important aspect of the project is called Activation, which has been specially developed for the game. This cutting edge animation technology allows artists and designers to combine traditional key-framed



Bruce Willis - game god in the making or good for nuthin' celebrity? PlayStation Plus cornered Hollywood's biggest Action Man and blitzed him with some quick-fire questions. ...

Erm, well actually we were part of a big press conference at which Bruce was present. But that counts. And we did ask some questions. Anyway, how did he survive?

What attracted you to *Apocalypse*?

"There were a lot of reasons. I'm a kinda game freak, I play a lot of games. I got in to this game because it involved a lot of cutting edge technology that actually didn't exist up until now. It's seemed like a good idea at the time, and it's turned out to be a great idea."

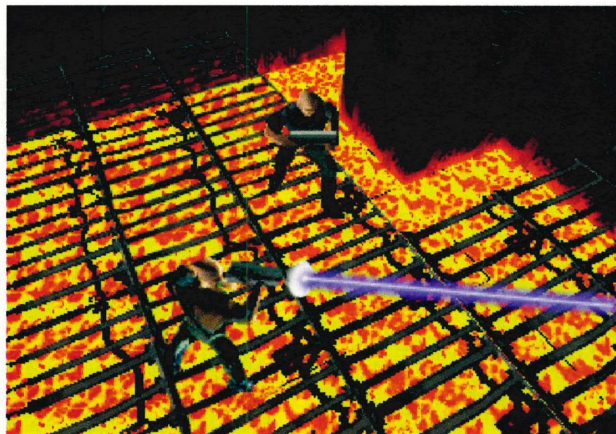
Your role in *Apocalypse* was a lot more involved than just voice acting, right?

"Yeah. We had this studio in California and John [Spinale, game director] put me in a very elaborate suit that captured my movement and put me into the game. All the body movement in the game are actually performed by me."

Was it harder to act in *Apocalypse* than it was in, say one of your action movies?

"No it wasn't hard, it was a lot of fun, although some of it was a challenge. But hey, acting isn't really that difficult as long as you can lie well!"

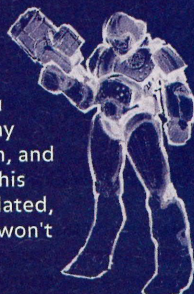
CONTINUED ON PAGE 38 ►►





Do you ever worry about violence in video games?

"The only violence I worry about is actually for real or takes place on the television every night, between 6 to 7.30. You can watch it, take in tiny doses of it like a poison, and if you take enough of this poison you'll get inoculated, so eventually violence won't affect you at all."



Have you played *Die Hard Trilogy*? How does *Apocalypse* compare?

"The body count's just a little bit higher in this one!"

Do you think virtual acting will catch on?

"If *Apocalypse* is successful I wouldn't be at all surprised to see a few more actors getting involved."

What about Demi, is she getting involved?

"She's hasn't been invited! Who knows, you might see her in her own game."

Are you going to let your kids play the game?

"Yeah. My eldest daughter already plays videogames."

How did you feel when you saw yourself in the game?

"It was pretty cool. It's virtual 3D technology, y'know, not a flat two-dimensional game. It's a big leap forward so yeah, it was pretty cool."

Is there a possibility *Apocalypse* will become a movie?

"There's a distinct possibility, we've already talked about it happening."

Any plans for more games?

"I'm gonna continue to work with these guys. I really like what we've done with *Apocalypse* and then there's always the possibility of the movie."

Didn't you think it was a risky choice, pioneering the move into virtual acting?

"You call it risky, I call it cool. I'm a gambler by nature and just walking across the street is risky, wouldn't you say?"

So what's next, Bruce?

"Well I gotta go kill 30 or 40 more people before midnight and I'm a little late right now, so I may just start right now if you don't mind."



animation (similar to cartoons) with more advanced techniques such as motion capture (ping pong balls) and inverse kinematics (no idea what this is but the dictionary says: Inverse meaning in reverse; kinematics meaning the science of motion without force).

Apparently this combination of processes creates realistic actions with truly

seamless and fluid transitions between movements, but without losing the controllability of the central character. Sounds the business.

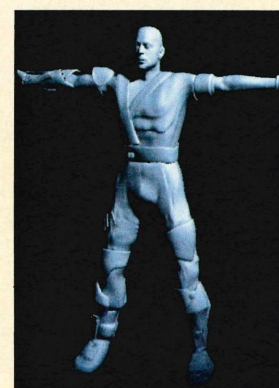
Activation also interfaces with the *Apocalypse* artificial intelligence engine, giving the computer-controlled characters the same degree of freedom of movement as that enjoyed by the player. This should allow them to

react more naturally to constantly changing situations, leading the player into thinking a personality is playing alongside them. At present this is one of the areas programmers are working hardest on, to ensure the finished work lives up to the promises and hype. Should that be the case, then when *Apocalypse* does arrive in November, we're in for a bit of a treat...



BRUCE IN A BOX

Having got such a major league star, Activision is not surprisingly anxious to make the most of their time with Mr Willis. Developers are pushing motion-capture and cyber-scan procedures to the limit in order to come up with a simulated Bruce that has all the recognisable qualities of the original. Just how much of a virtual Bruce this process turns out remains to be seen, but you can see below how much effort is being put into the attempt. Check out that virtual lunchbox.



"Makes Sega Rally look like an old age pensioner"
GamesMaster

**"PlayStation owners everywhere will be rejoicing
with this game"**

Official PlayStation Magazine

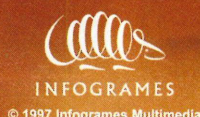
"Fastest thing on the PlayStation"
Edge

Official PlayStation Magazine 9/10
PlayStation Plus 95%



- Official cars from 1997 WRC season
- Multi-player mode
- Varied weather and terrain driving conditions
- Real time 3D imaging and Dolby™ Surround Sound™
- 42 Tracks - the largest number ever
- Totally realistic rally road handling
- Real engine sound and radio communication with professional co-drivers

V-RALLY
97 CHAMPIONSHIP EDITION
Heart Racing Action





d on'cha just hate games that try to be right-on? There's not many of them, probably a handful at the most, but topical games are just so... passé. Who cares if it's based on current affairs as long as the end result is smart, right?

Well, Electronic Arts is hoping *Nuclear Strike* is both.

With *Soviet Strike* it managed to successfully forge politics with traditional shoot 'em up values, creating a game that focused on the breakdown of the Soviet Union while mixing in a wad of meaty gameplay.

It wasn't perfect though. The scrolling was j-e-r-k-y and some found it too limited. I mean, one helicopter? Tight gits.

Nuclear Strike is much more liberal with its combat gear. There's the bog of course, but there's also a load of others to play around with, from monster tanks to jet aircraft overloaded with missiles.

There's no yawnsome sto-

ryline or moralistic values to hurdle either. Delving deep inside the action-packed sack marked shoot 'em up, this is a non-stop battle of gripping gameplay and fantastic photorealistic graphics.

BLOWN AWAY

Just as *Soviet Strike* was based on the collapse of the Soviet Union and more precisely the megalomaniacal plans of The Madman, *Nuclear Strike* is themed around the possibility of a nuclear attack.

Henri LeMonde, a wanted terrorist and no doubt distant relative of *Soviet Strike*'s Madman, has nicked a nuclear bomb. It's not just a

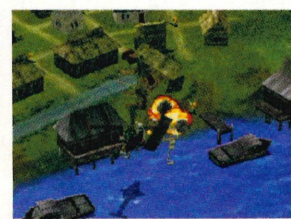
tiny explosive either, but a bleedin' great tactical bomb aimed at North Korea.

But (and this where the plot gets complicated), the bomb is only a diversion. While the world is panicking about the potential consequences of a full-on nuclear strike and the possible restart of the Korean war, LeMonde commandeers an abandoned Russian missile base. From here he sends out his threats to take over the world - or else!

You're the global saviour. It says so on your business card. So when StrikeNet is called into handle the situation, guess who's just started their shift?

SEEK AND DESTROY

Nuclear Strike follows the classic *Strike* game structure. The overall campaign against LeMonde is split into individual scenarios, each tackled in turn as the player slowly nears the goal. Each of the scenarios is further divided into missions which must be completed in the correct order to reach the next section. These are pretty simple



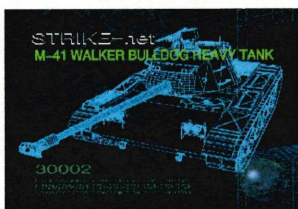
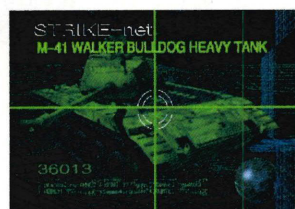
Release : NOVEMBER

Company : EA

Price : £TBA

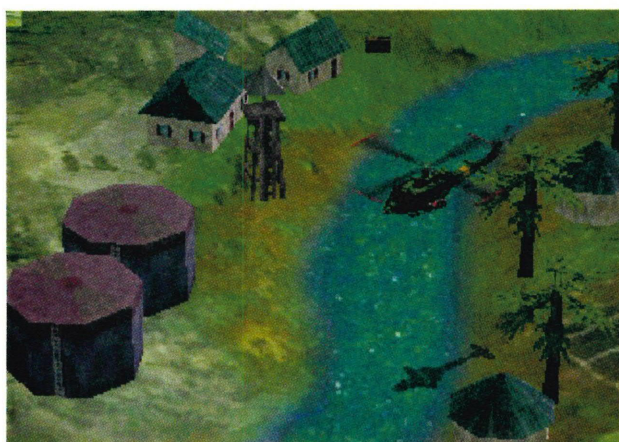
Players : 1

Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP



tasks, like knocking out radar dishes and other targets of strategic importance. The point of all this is to gradually cripple LeMonde's army and gain clues as to his whereabouts, by capturing top ranking officers and squeezing their testicles 'til they blab.

Each theatre of war is a living, breathing environment that reacts to the player's

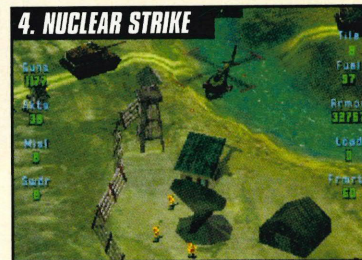
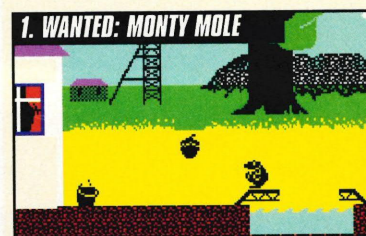


actions. Tank escorts, for example, can easily slip through the StrikeNet unless they're intercepted at the right time. But hit them early, by finding the fastest route between objectives, and the rest of the mission is all the more simple.

Since each of the enemy units is artificially intelligent, down to every last troop, negotiating a safe flight path through each level is practically impossible. There are hundreds of enemies to contend with, most unrelated to the actual mission objectives but a sizeable threat nonetheless. Unless LeMonde's communications network is crippled by taking

CURRENT AFFAIRS OF THE PAST

Nuclear Strike isn't the first topical video game. Gremlin kickstarted the trend well over a decade ago when *Monty Mole* was created to fight against the picketing miners. Games based on current affairs have since blossomed on pretty much every platform, reaching a crescendo with the birth of Electronic Arts' classic *Strike* series.



ABOVE: 1. IT IS 1984, AND THE MINER'S STRIKE IS IN FULL FLOW. ENTER GREMLIN WITH THEIR PICKET-BUSTING PLATFORM HERO...

2. PIRANHA'S ARCADE/ADVENTURE STARRD A FOOTMAN SCOURING BUCK HOUSE FOR OBJECTS THE ROYALS NEEDED - MAINLY FOOD FOR FERGIE. 3. THE FIRST STRIKE GAME WHICH FOLLOWED ON FROM THE GULF WAR, WITH A SADDAM HUSSEIN LOOKALIKE AT LARGE ONCE AGAIN. 4. DOES ALL THIS TALK MEAN A NUCLEAR WAR IS OUT OF THE QUESTION? IF THIS IS ANYTHING TO GO BY, PROBABLY NOT...



out the control centres and satellite uplinks, then the enemy can track your every move and attack en masse. Wipe them out and they are blind, leaving you pretty much free to fly beyond enemy lines undetected.

STRIKE: THE NEXT GENERATION

If you've played *Soviet Strike* then you're probably thinking this is all pretty familiar stuff. That's because it is. *Nuclear Strike* is an extension of its predecessor, not a complete rewrite, but it does have some major improvements to brag about. Electronic Arts has really worked on the *Strike* game engine. A year ago the photorealistic landscape was pretty impressive, but the scrolling wasn't. The engine just wasn't advanced enough to physically shift the scenery around at a decent speed. Thanks to a few enhancements *Nuclear Strike* looks a lot better. There's still the same level of detail in the background graphics, but now they move a lot more smoothly.

The objects are much better too. They no longer look detached from the background, a problem that

dogged *Soviet Strike*. Houses are now richly textured, while boats, tanks and other moving objects are more detailed. These minor improvements are petty compared to the explosions which have been given a complete overhaul. Rather than exploding in a hail of ghostly polygons, enemy units are engulfed in flame. Bits of wreckage are then flung in the air, before falling to the ground and bouncing to a stop. It's exciting stuff, and makes playing this tense shooter a much more absorbing experience.

THE DIRTY DOZEN

The best is saved until last. Forget flying through the whole game in a single chopper because *Nuclear Strike* has a much larger array of vehicles on offer. In fact there's a total of 12 to discover, starting with the obligatory Super Apache. Later the more versatile Comanche is available, along with the Huey Cobra. The Harrier jump jet combines fantastic speed with excellent manoeuvrability, but back on the ground the Abrams tank is king. Add the airboat to StrikeNet's arsenal and you're ready for anything. Hopefully...



A CLOSE-UP
DESIGNED TO
SHOW THE
LEVEL OF
DETAIL ON
EACH PLAYER
SPRITE.

Just as autumn follows summer, and just as the run-up to Christmas begins, so EA announce another addition to the *FIFA* family. This year though, EA is proud to announce a slightly different take on the ongoing football

licence. Instead of plain old *FIFA '98*, EA has secured the rights to produce two games surrounding the hype of next year's World Cup finals. As such, this motion-captured epic recounts the build up to the footballing event set to dominate the TV next year. That way, if Glenn Hoddle cocks it up and somehow England fail to qualify, *RtWC* will allow you to take over from where he left off.

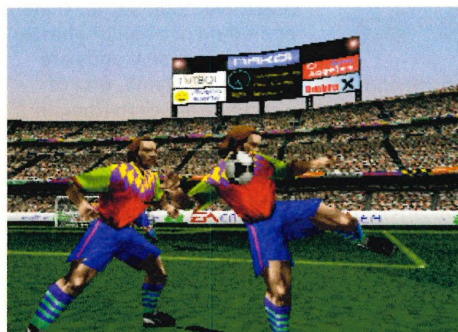
Whereas next year's game (what would have been *FIFA '99*) will allow the player to actually challenge for the World Cup, *RtWC* is all about the blood, sweat and obscure African teams granted the chance to qualify for the main event.

Following the grand balls-up that was *FIFA '97*, EA is determined to put right all the faults associated with that game. As such, it's retaining a number of aspects of the '97 game, but concentrating more on the gameplay than fancy visual effects.

'BRE WE GO!

RtWC uses an enhanced version of the *FIFA '97* 3D engine, with a wealth of game cameras allowing the action

to be viewed from virtually any angle and fully motion-captured sprites to recreate the assorted moves to benefit from such trickery. New Spurs signing and star of *FIFA '97*, David Ginola, was whisked to EA's Vancouver offices for a repeat of his motion-capture duties, and went through headers, volleys, runs, and tackles for inclusion in the game. With Ginola's footage in the can, the basic movements are transferred to a wire-frame skeleton, and the animation blended together using a system called 'motion blending.' This was pioneered in *FIFA '97*, and basically allows programmers to switch between animations at any point without a noticeable pause. So, if the player makes



AS BEFORE,
THE POLYGO-
NAL SPRITES
MEAN THE
ACTION CAN BE
SEEN FROM
VIRTUALLY ANY
ANGLE.



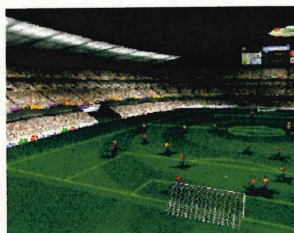
Release : OCTOBER
Company : EA
Price : TBA
Players : 1-8
Genre : SPORTS SIM



WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO WEMBLEY

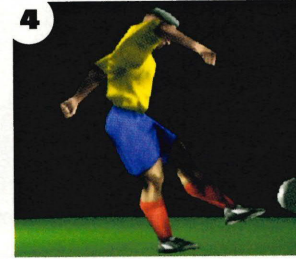
RtWC boasts 16 international stadia, all of which have been copied to the last centimetre. During the game's preproduction, EA sent its product managers to key international stadiums armed with cameras. With the permission of the relevant football authorities, photos were taken of each pitch from every possible angle, while the precise dimensions were copied from information supplied by the individual countries. In addition to the accuracy of the stadia recreations, EA has also added a series of in-game changes to the pitches. With a number of different weather conditions on offer, the pitches are affected by the changes in climate. During a league tournament, for example, the goal areas and centre circle take the brunt of wear and tear, and the condition of these areas gets steadily worse. Similarly, if a divot is removed mid-game, a repair will be made, but the general run of the pitch won't be as good.





FIFTEEN OF THE BEST

In addition to the World Cup tournaments, EA has also included its tried and tested domestic league competitions. The 15 major international leagues are all on offer, from the Premiership through to the Serie A and Malaysian top flight. Each team within these is also included, with accurate kit details, statistics and form supplied for each. Providing the statistics is Fantasy Football League's Statto, and in order to keep the game as current as possible and to take any last minute transfers into consideration, EA is waiting to the start of the season in August before inputting the details into the game.



DAVID GINOLA'S RARELY-SEEN SHOOTING ABILITIES AS SEEN IN FIFA ROAD TO WORLD CUP.

a run, slows down, and chests an incoming ball, there is no pause as it cuts between the individual animations.

VIVE LE DIFFERENCE

Ginola's motion-captures now grace 172 teams (it's actually 170 in the real thing - Brazil go through because they won it last time, and the French are hosts), ranging from the might of Brazil, Germany and Italy, down to the Faroe Islands and Cameroon. Each team sports both home and away kits, with the wire frame bodies padded out with polygon physiques, and the kits created as skins wrapped around each individual player. EA claims a team of over 150 people is engaged on *RtWC*, and the majority of these are artists busying themselves with the latest kit designs.

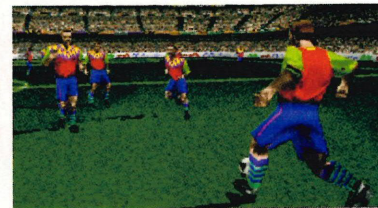
The game is set to be the knock-out tournament to end all tournaments, with the 172 teams battling it out for one of the 32 places in the finals. The matches take place all over the globe, with EA's programmers recreating 16 of the most famous stadia in the game (see boxout). With the large sprites once again being put through their paces, EA are also attempting a handful

of all new visual effects, with the TV-style presentation following the action, and even the occasional lens flare as the sun pans into view.

VOCAL TRIO

As the on-field mastery takes place, *FIFA '97*'s commentary trio of John Motson, Andy Gray and Des Lynam once again return for voiceover duties. The script contains over 40,000 phrases, not including player names, and was recorded by the trio in February. The larger script means EA can be more flexible with the phrases used, and is confident the result will be a better flowing commentary with less nonsensical phrases and repetition. No more 'thirty seconds left' when they kick off the second half, then! Once again Motty and Andy Gray do the majority of the donkey work, with Motson left to deal with player names and details of play, while Gray offers comments on the quality of play. Des, true to Match of the Day form, is the suave handover man.

RtWC is currently entering the final stages of development with the final touches being made to the PlayStation code. It is too early to say whether it is an improvement on *FIFA '97*, but all will be revealed when it is released in October



SOME OF THE STADIUMS ON OFFER.

Katy Kat



"I'll have a junior chunky burger and curly fries"



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Ghost

In The Shell

YOU'VE NEVER SEEN CUTSCENES LIKE THESE: GHOST IN THE SHELL CONTAINS TONS OF HI-RES ANIMATED CUTSCENES WHICH COMBINE BRILLIANT ACTION WITH THE SEXY MAJOR KUSANAGI AND THE CUTESY FUCHIKOMAS.



When videogames are made from comics or film licences, they often turn out to be poor, unoriginal affairs. So a videogame adapted from a book and a film might spell real trouble. The comic of *Ghost In The Shell* was a classic work by creator Masamune Shirow which was then made into a superb Manga film with a quality rivalling that other anime classic, *Akira*.

The story of the film featured plenty of cyborgs running around shooting each other, which would have seemed to be an obvious idea for a game, but Sony has taken a different and more original tack. The game makes one of the supporting characters the star, in this case a vehicle called a fuchikoma, which is used to transport the player through each of the game's incredible 12 futuristic levels.

FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD FUCHIKOMA

As Major Motoko Kusanagi, the hero of *Ghost In The Shell*, the player takes control of a fuchikoma in order to complete the game's various anti-terrorist and military missions. There's plenty of shooting to be done, but what makes the game differ from the horde of 3D shooters on the PlayStation is the fuchikoma. This is a four-legged one-man tank which can walk on walls. What this means is instead of walking around buildings you can walk up the side of them, and

jump off them to the ground without any damage whatsoever. When in a corridor you can walk on the ceiling in order to avoid mines and crawl down lift shafts in order to get to other floors. In fact, the game features a great many different areas, which change it significantly from level to level because of the interaction the fuchikoma's climbing abilities offer. For instance, in one level you reach a point where there is no floor at all, so the fighting has to be done while walking on the ceiling. And what makes the game incredible

and disorientating in equal amounts is that the camera stays firmly locked behind the fuchikoma throughout the Spider-Man antics, making even games like *Descent* pale in comparison.

HIGHWAY BATTLE

While most of the 12 levels are based around moving through areas destroying various enemies on the way and taking on one of the many bosses (not that that's a bad thing) there are some stages which offer twists on this theme. One level requires the player to destroy a series of



Release : Out Now
Company : SCEJ
Price : £19.99
Players : 1
Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP



NOW KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE 'BORG. JUST LIKE THE COMIC AND FILM, GHOST IN THE SHELL FEATURES PREDATOR-STYLE CAMOUFLAGE.

HAPPINESS IS A WARM FUCHIKOMA

Weapons are always of high importance in shoot 'em ups, and *Ghost In The Shell* offers a simple, yet effective one. The fuchikoma has three deadly weapons to bring justice to the masses, and require tactical usage for the optimum effect.



MACHINE GUNS

These are the most commonly used weapons, which auto-aim up or down for those hard to reach targets. Infinite of ammo but sadly low of damage.



MISSILES

These are accessed by holding down the fire button while in range. This will cause up to six missiles to lock on. Lock all six onto one target for a quick takedown.



GRENADES

Only three of these smart bombs can be carried at once, but when released they create a short range blast to destroy most non-boss enemies in an instant.



bombs before they explode, while two of the levels have the fuchikoma speeding along a highway and a river, being chased by the enemy and fighting through the defences placed in its path. Some levels also include night vision sequences where the view turns various shades of green, creating a very eerie atmosphere indeed. And the settings range from sewers and elevator shafts to the insides and outsides of huge skyscrapers. But whatever the level, there are always plenty of enemies around to shoot and be shot

by. These range from simple foot soldiers to various robots, large and small helicopters, other fuchikomas and even flying cyborgs which will be familiar to any fans of Appleseed, another of Masamune Shirow's comic classics. Obviously the bosses are the most impressive of all the enemies, and they exhibit all the mad mecha style that the Japanese are known for, and get more inventive and deadly with every level. They include flying and leaping robots, heavily armed trucks and ships as well as a gigantic laser machine. The bosses are much more heavily armed than the player, so the speed and agility of the fuchikoma has to be used in order to defeat them. All of this is shown with some great looking 3D graphics which move at a good pace, and the music has some thumping good tunes as well.

And as if that wasn't enough there are some cinema-quality animated cutscenes with all new footage created for the game. All we can hope for is the gameplay matches the high level of presentation. We wait with bated breath.

DON'T SCREW UP IN THE TRAINING MODE, OR YOU'LL END UP LOOKING LIKE THAT BIT OF WRECKAGE ABOVE, GETTING DRAGGED AROUND BY YOUR MATE. TO THE BOTTOM LEFT YOU CAN SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN MANGA MEETS SPIDER-MAN MEETS BLADE RUNNER MEETS PLAYSTATION.

Sunny Funny



"I'll have a ginger soda"



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Pandemonium! was one of the surprise hits of last year. After the likes of *Gex* and *Off-Road Interceptor*, Crystal Dynamics had been all but written off as a PlayStation developer. Then came *Pandemonium!*: a platform game which truly looked as if it belonged on a PlayStation, and which was as playable as the best 16bit offerings. *Pandemonium!* worked on a number of levels. It was fast, the intelligent camera system made the game look completely 3D (wherein it was in fact a jazzy-looking 2D effort), and the control over the characters was instinctive and responsive. In short, *Pandemonium!* was like a breath of platform game fresh air compared to the likes of *Johnny Bazookatone* and *RayMan*.

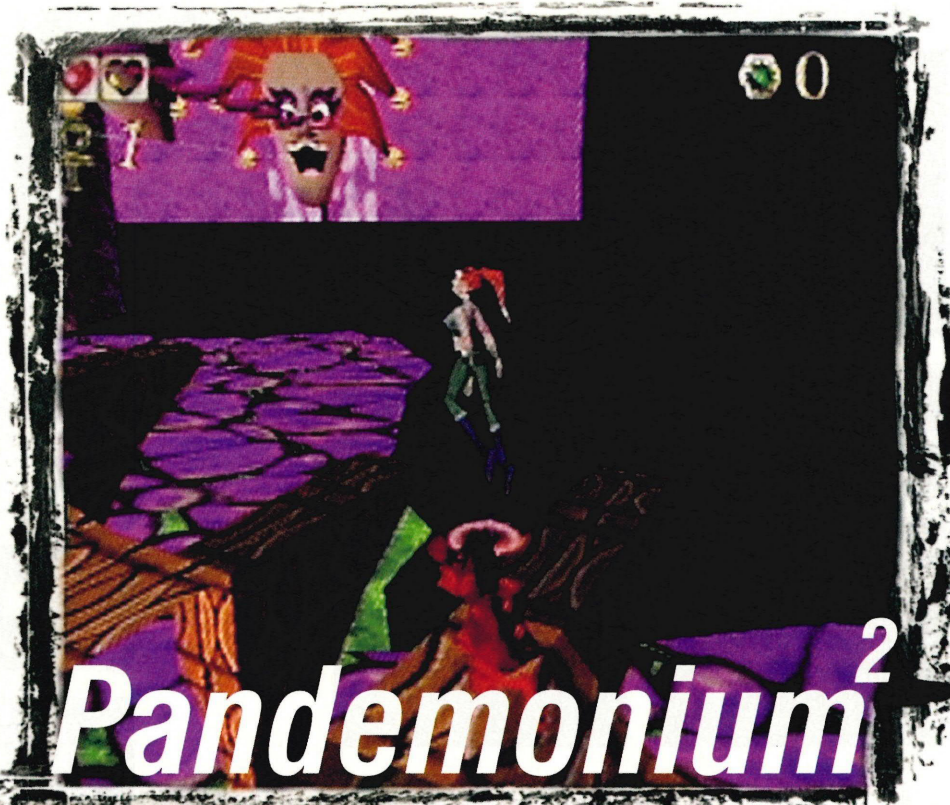
Such was the success of *Pandemonium!* a sequel was inevitable, and in true follow-up style Crystal Dynamics has strived to make everything bigger and better than before. This time round, though, they have also OD'd on nutty pills because *Pandemonium 2* is weird. Very weird.

ALL GROWN UP

The most impressive aspects of *Pandemonium!* were the cameras and the intricate level design. It is these two areas that first caught your eye, and it is these that have been pushed even further for the sequel.

Pandemonium 2 is set several years after the events of the first game, with the heroes of that adventure, Nikki and Fargus, both older and wiser. The years have been kind to Nikki, and the athletic half of the pair is now a... er, well-developed rival for Lara Croft's crown. Fargus the jester, on the other hand, has gone totally mad, and as such has increased his offensive capabilities, updating his trusty magic staff - Sid - into a boomerang-style device.

The scenario is the usual sort of thing. The pair are reunited in a quest for a comet. In keeping with the bizarre world Nikki and



Fargus inhabit, this is no ordinary lump of rock, and whoever reaches it will be endowed with magical powers beyond their wildest dreams. Thus, every oddball critter on their home world is headed for the still-smoking meteor, with Nikki and Fargus encountering and entering battle with dozens of enemies along the way.

PUSHING IT FURTHER

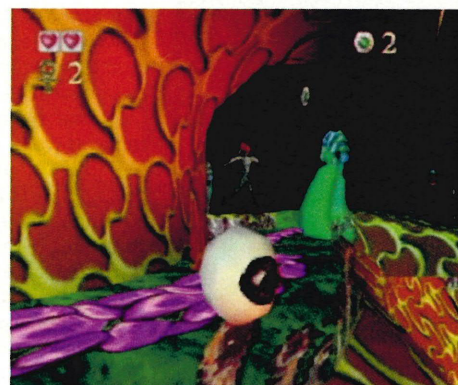
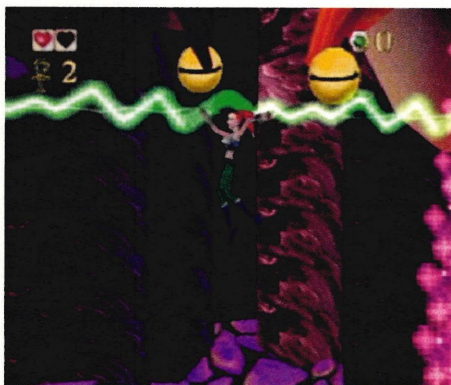
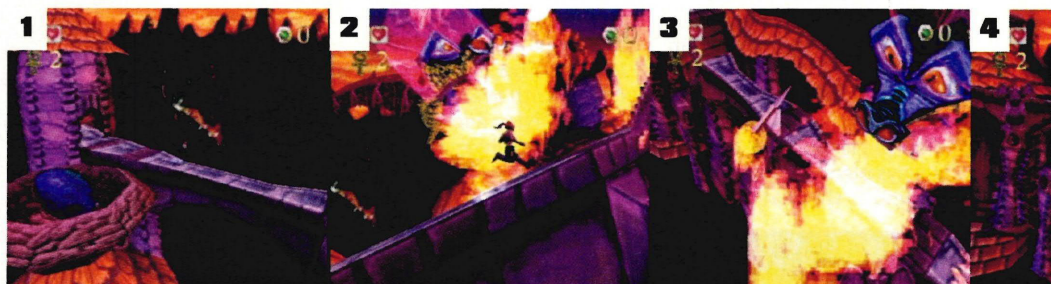
While the basic simple platform action remains the same as before, both Nikki and Fargus are better equipped

for the adventure. In addition to their basic run and jump moves, both can now swim, climb and grapple, while the 3D engine and camera effects are pushed to the max as they demonstrate their newly-found flying skills. The weaponry quote has also been pumped up, and if jumping on the said nasties seems a tad tame, Fargus and Nikki have access to power-ups which magnify their usual projectile weapons - and blow anything they touch into hundreds of tiny pieces. Chalk another one up to the

impressive visual effects.

While Crystal Dynamics were keen to add to the basic *Pandemonium!* engine, they were also wary not to get in the way of the flow of action. *Pandemonium!* succeeded because its elements gelled together beautifully, so for the sequel they have gone mad with the graphical theme and extended key sections they felt were underplayed in the original. The level design is a perfect example of this. The path to the comet spans 21 stages, each of which is considerably

RIGHT (1-6): THE BOSSES ARE BIGGER AND BETTER THAN IN THE FIRST GAME, WITH THIS DRAGON FLYING AROUND BEFORE SWOOPING IN TO FRY OUR ACROBATIC HEROES.



Release : DECEMBER
Company : BMG
Price : TBA
Players : 1
Genre : PLATFORM



larger than before. The levels also offer different routes through the game, as Crystal acknowledge complaints levelled at the linearity of the first game.

INSANE IN THE BRAIN

The actual levels are best described as psychedelic. The colours used are bright and gaudy, with assorted sprites and bosses equally bizarre, ranging from spiders and odd two-legged critters, through to parts of the backdrop which are alive and try to grab our heroes. Starting within a castle, the pair then step into the big, wide world, and enter weird forests, alien citadels, and even take a trip through the darker parts of Fargus's brain. Add to this platforms made out of teeth, tongues and alien flesh and you can be assured *Pandemonium 2* is going to be

every bit as fresh to look at as its predecessor.

Rounding off the action, Crystal Dynamics is currently adding a techno soundtrack, and the plan is to tailor the music so the beats-per-minute are upped whenever one of the stunning bosses makes an appearance. BMG is also keen to see speech used to further the story from either Fargus or Nikki's point of view, but this is as yet undecided. BMG is looking at a Christmas release for *Pandemonium 2*, and as fans of the first one we'll be monitoring it very carefully.



BIZARRE HARDLY SUMS UP THE INCREDIBLY STRANGE BACKDROPS AND INHABITANTS IN PANDEMONIUM 2.

BOSSED ABOUT

If there was one weak link in the original *Pandemonium!*, it was that the boss creatures were a bit weak. For the sequel though, Crystal Dynamics has gone to town on these end-of-stage guardians which now span larger areas and are considerably harder to beat. The best example of this is the dragon boss guarding one of the game's castle stages. Seated within the walls of one of the castles, the dragon spews fire at both Fargus and Nikki, moving his vast head around for better aim. Defeating him means using objects found in the play area, but we're not giving anything away. Yet.

PJ Berry



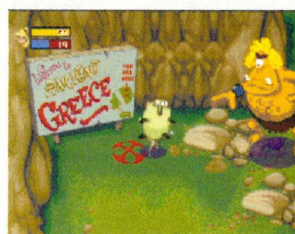
"sounds cool"



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TUT. YOU WAIT AGES FOR ONE HERCULES GAME THEN TWO COME ALONG AT ONCE. HERC'S ADVENTURES SHOULDN'T BE CONFUSED WITH DISNEY'S FORTHCOMING HERCULES



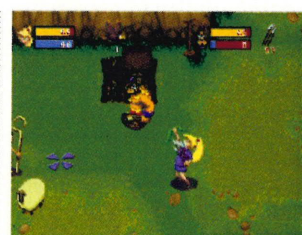
Herc's Adventures

It's a fact of life that Disney films, despite being aimed at younger audiences, are enjoyed just as much by adults. What's more bizarre is that this formula for film should apply to the world of videogames. Thanks to the latest Disney animated epic, two Hercules-based games are due to be released for the PlayStation, and although obviously aimed at newcomers to games, both are likely to appeal to experienced players. Last month we gave you a glimpse of Disney's *Hercules Action Game*, this month we peek at *Herc's Adventures* from LucasArts.

MYTH AND LEGEND

Set in mythological times, *Herc's Adventures* is a top-down hack'n'slash romp, involving characters from well-known Greek legends and set around the Middle East. Big cheese Zeus has discovered the world is in great danger. Hades has grouped together its evil forces and is planning to take control of the living world. One hero (or two if playing the game with a friend) must take on a quest to defeat unholy beasts, solve puzzles and riddles, enlist the help of other Gods and finally defeat Hades.

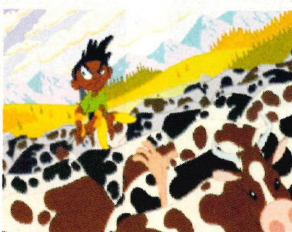
Graphics are all two dimensional sprites, but a forced 3D perspective gives a solid



impression to everything. Backdrops are set across deserts, islands, forests and snow-capped mountains. Clear and stylish rather than visually amazing, the individual areas benefit from bizarrely themed sets of whacked-out enemies.

Skeleton warriors pop up from the ground and knock their heads off leaves

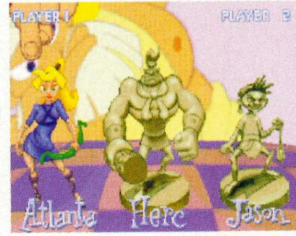
them running around slashing at thin air. Huge Cyclops are the first beasts that pose any kind of threat, and these giants like nothing better than to stuff their faces full of cute, fluffy sheep. Centurions, tree spirits, vultures, hogs and a whole army of other creatures have all been endowed with amusing characteristics to keep you



Release : OCTOBER
Company : VIRGIN
Price : £44.99
Players : 1-2
Genre : ADVENTURE



THE GRAPHICS WON'T BLOW YOUR SOCKS OFF, BUT THE GAME IS FILLED WITH BIZARRE AND QUIRKY CHARACTERS AIMED AT MAKING UP FOR ANY SHORTCOMINGS IN THE LOOKS DEPT.



smiling throughout the entire adventure. Less amusing are the end of level guardians such as Hydra and Medusa, which are large and tough to beat even when you're armed to the teeth and know their weak spots.

Each of the three characters available - that's Hercules, Jason and Atlanta - have a standard weapon and one special attack to rely on. Other objects can also be bought from stalls, found under rocks or houses or earned by completing certain tasks. Bundles of spears, piles of rotting rubbish, bombs, killer birds and chillies (which impart poisonous bad breath) act as useful secondary weapons and have different effects on enemies.

Other items include keys, life giving kebabs and blow-up sheep, which may or may not put the fun back into Herc's sex life. Collecting money is important as the scribes who record your progress are greedy fellows. The most enjoyable earner has to be lobbing Roman guards at archery targets. Quite why this should reap golden coins as prizes remains a mystery...

NON-STOP

Despite a large map to conquer, none of the action is split up and the game plays smoothly without any noticeable pauses. Sections are linked together seamlessly, giving the impression that you are involved in a massive quest rather than simply solving individual levels. Gameplay seems to be a well thought-out mix between baddie-stomping, platform-jumping and working through basic puzzles. Huge well-animated Gods pop up along the adventure, offering tips and setting goals to ensure Herc is kept on track. This help, combined with straight forward gameplay, should mean the player is never unsure of the next move and always interested in what lies ahead.

Lacking much originality or stunning effects that really push the PlayStation's abilities, *Herc's Adventure* wasn't the most eagerly awaited title to arrive at PlayStation Plus this month. However, depth, comic touches and very strong gameplay mean the alpha version has surprised us all and proved tricky to put down. Watch out for a review next issue.

PICK A HERO

Two other characters can also be used to play through the game and tactics will alter depending on who's chosen. Herc, say, is strong but his basic weapon is a weak club. Atlanta makes a tasty pick as her arrows cause plenty of damage. Small-fry Jason is a nimble fellow able to run from trouble, which is just as well as his sling shot is hardly devastating.



HERC'S ADVENTURES IS CHOCK-FULL OF COOL CARTOON CHARACTERS, INCLUDING ZEUS WHO TURNS OUT TO BE A BIT OF A DIRTY OLD MAN.

Prince Fleaswallow



"The skunk over here will bring you luck"



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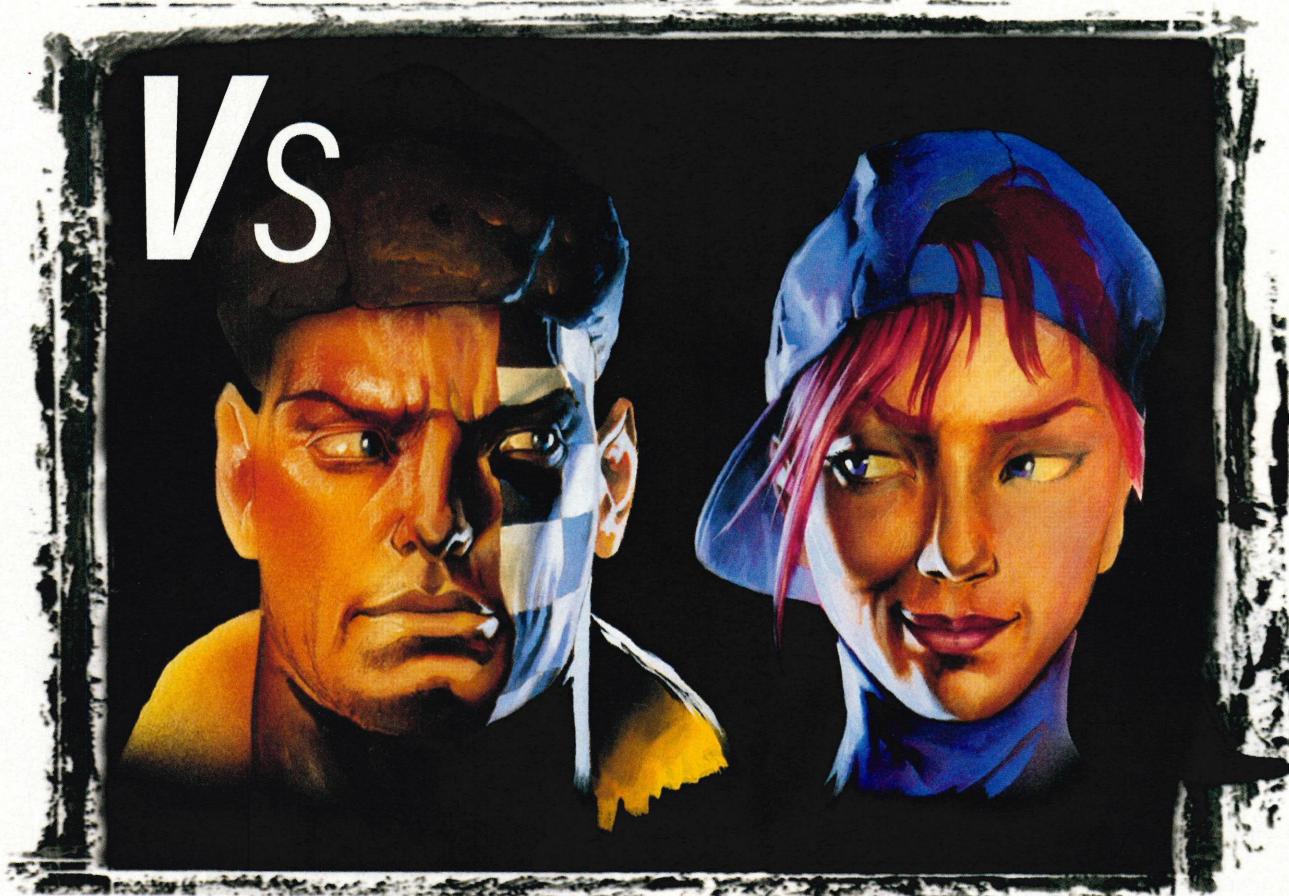
Countdown to Meltdown.

Stop the war before it begins in the explosive,
multi-vehicular sequel to Soviet Strike.TM

NUCLEAR 
STRIKETM







responsible for releasing some of the PlayStation's lesser known titles, American game publishers THQ seem to be moving up a gear at the moment. Despite being based on a pretty silly sport, *WCW Vs The World* recently scored well with our review team, and *AirRace*, which was brought to you first by this maga-

zine, appears to be developing very nicely (check it out for yourself in this month's Progress Report on page 16). The company has also secured the rights to publish *Ghost In The Shell* in the US, although it's still unclear who will pick up the manga-inspired game in Europe. Latest in the line of possible hits is the snappily titled 3D beat'em up *Vs* (as in 'versus') This project is set to take the

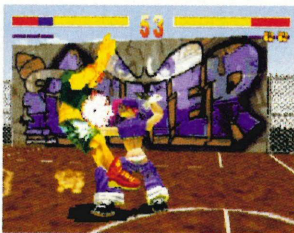
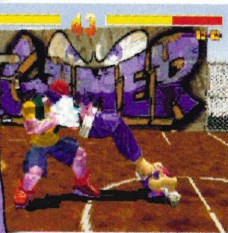
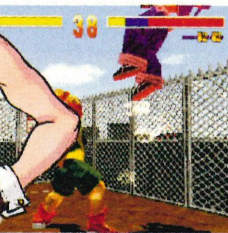
company into completely uncharted waters as it's the first THQ game to be programmed in-house. PlayStation Plus was treated to the first look at this slick, fast fighter.

STREET CULTURE

When the development team first started work on *Vs*, it was agreed the PlayStation had enough Japanese-style fighting games and this project represented a chance to come up with something fresh. Impressive as each instalment of *Tekken* or *Street Fighter* might be, THQ wanted to put together a game heavily influenced by present

day American street culture. What they've come up with is a set of characters that come from four rival gangs: Hoods, Streets, Beach and Campus.

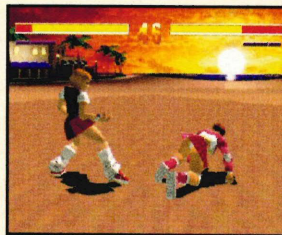
Rather than just being a case of pitting different techniques against each other, *Vs* has sub-cultures going head to head. Possible match-ups could include Slim Daddy, the karate pimp from the Street gang, taking on schoolgirl and Aiki expert Kathleen from the Campus gang. Or how about street-fighting rapper Ramos from the Hoods in a battle against Beach gang member Mineo, the Jujitsu master and Venice street mime. Each gang also

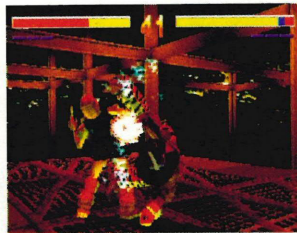
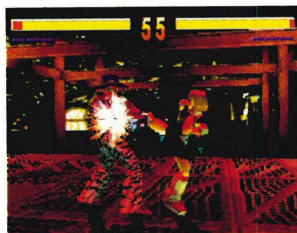
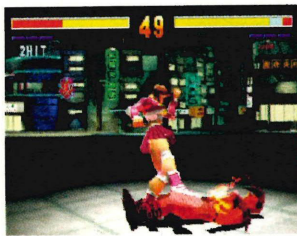
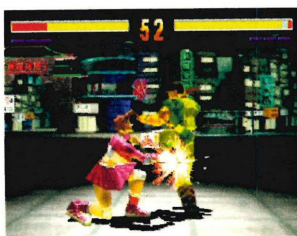


Release : OCTOBER
Company : THQ
Price : £44.99
Players : 1-2
Genre : BEAT 'EM UP

GET YA KIT OFF

Stylistically *Vs* bears more than a passing resemblance to Sega's *Fighting Vipers*. Although combat areas aren't walled in, and there are no weapons like skateboards to use, THQ is currently deciding whether or not to release a version in which clothes can be knocked off. The early Alpha version given exclusively to PlayStation Plus didn't include this feature but we'll keep our sweaty little fingers crossed.





has a boss that - once defeated - becomes playable, making a very respectable total of 18 selectable fighters.

At present the exact nature of the fighting system is still being decided, with programmers testing new moves on a daily basis. The version shown to us appears to have energy charge-ups, causing blue sparks to generate around characters during strikes. It's possible to turn opponents quickly and attack from the back and some characters can change their stance, taking on a crane-like pose, balancing on one leg poised for swift kicks.

NEW TWISTS?

A selection of holds, throws and power moves have also been programmed and look like adding a few new twists to the genre. Many of the fighters link together pins

and punches that bring tears to your eyes, the schoolgirl enjoys grabbing opponents by the hair, kneeling them in the head then grinding their faces in, one of the Kung Fu experts jams his knuckles into the eyes. Bouts also end in very satisfying fashion, with fatal blows causing the screen to whiteout and blood to spurt from the arteries of defeated character. Satisfying, that is, providing you're not on the receiving end of the killing blow.

Controls so far have been kept to a minimum, a la *Virtua Fighter*. Kick, punch and evade are spread across just three buttons - combining number of taps with different directions reveals a large number of attacks that mix punches and kicks.

Juggling opponents with attacks also plays an important role in fights but timing

these is not overly fussy and it's fairly easy to keep your foe up in the air for six hits.

Seven modes of play are listed so far, but as the version is so early, only a few of these are up and running right now.

Not surprisingly there's one or two player modes. Survival will pit players against the whole field of combatants with just the one life, but in addition there's rumble, challenge and exhibition options which are yet to be explained.

Vs certainly has speed on its side, running at a blinding 60 frames per second in NTSC. The good news for European PlayStation owners is that developers say the game is expected to keep the same rate in its PAL format. So far THQ's adventure into programming looks like being very promising.

NICE BACKDROPS

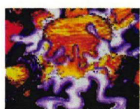
While backdrops don't make a game, there's no doubt that an interesting setting bolsters action. Vs boasts loads of well-made scenes, from school playgrounds, underground stations, beaches, roof tops and construction sites.

In all there are 12 to choose from and have animated features, such as subway trains that roar past. Some have tight parameters, bringing ring outs into the equation, which should give a nice mixed feeling to gameplay.





Magic the Gathering



**SINCE MAGIC:
THE
GATHERING IS
BASED ON A
CARD GAME,
WHEN WILL WE
SEE THE FIRST
TOP TRUMPS
TITLE?**

We've seen videogames based on films, comics, cartoons, RPGs and even board games, but never one based on a card game. That is, of course, until now (otherwise this is going to be a very short preview indeed).

Magic: The Gathering is based on the immensely popular collectable card game where players have their own deck with cards representing various spells and monsters used to attack the other player. The PlayStation version follows the same idea, but allows attacks to be seen, instead of just laying cards on a table. First the player has to choose a character and deck of cards, effectively



writing their own spell book. Once this is done, there are two different ways of playing, either in Duel mode, where they can fight against the computer or a friend, or in the Campaign mode.

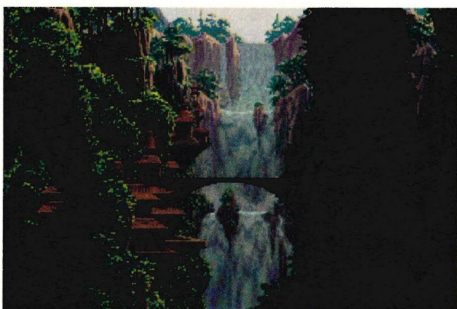
Duel is where the immediate action happens, since it takes the players straight into a one-on-one wizard war. Campaign has a slower pace, and has the player taking on other wizards using a



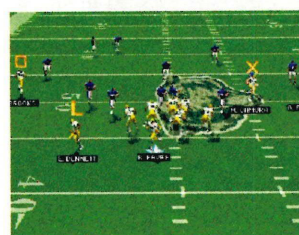
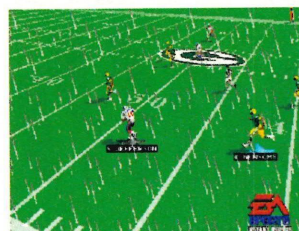
map of the game's fantasy world. Here the player can try to conquer territories in order to win. If an area is owned by a wizard, then a battle ensues, if it is neutral then a series of text windows come up showing conversations with people met in those lands. A series of choices are given in response to what these people say, and while the right decision can gain land or extra spells, the



wrong one can cost magic and more. With the inclusion of beautifully drawn pictures of the lands, as well as the great card artwork, the game comes across with a real fantasy world feel. The in-game graphics are unfortunately looking a bit ropey at the moment though, but hopefully when the review version comes in the playability will more than make up for any visual shortcomings.



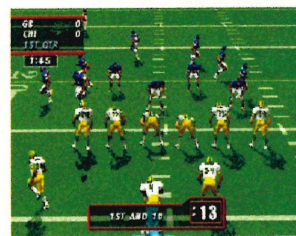
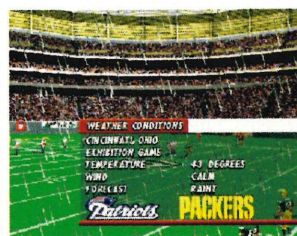
Release : OCTOBER
Company : ACCLAIM
Price : TBA
Players : 1-2
Genre : FANTASY



Madden NFL '98

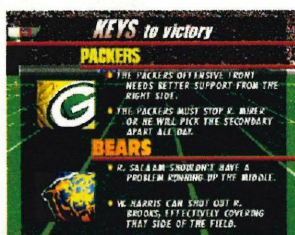
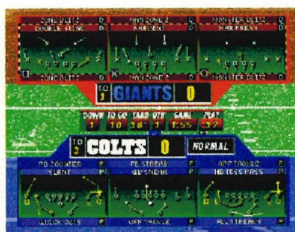
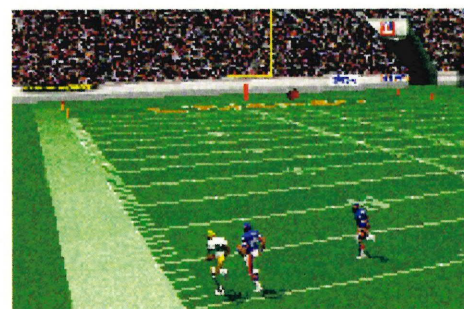
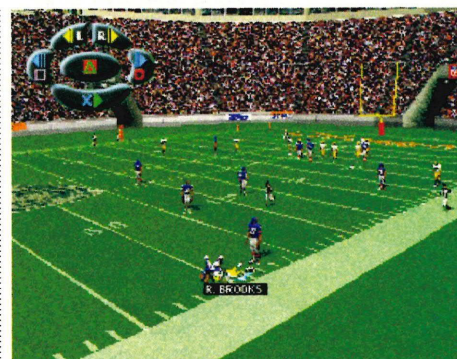
Yes, it's that time again. The annual updating of sports titles is coming up - when all the titles add an extra year to the number on the end, and we all get some more teams and options to play with. First out of the gate is the latest instalment in the *John Madden* series of American football games. One of the longest running sports series in gaming (the first *Madden* game was on the Sega Megadrive) the games are widely regarded as being the best American football titles around. Now in its second incarnation on the PlayStation (the last one being *Madden '97*, obviously), *Madden '98* is the culmi-

nation of all the games that came before it in the series, and includes all 30 league teams. The game features a whole slew of options familiar to anyone who's seen the latest clutch of ice hockey and basketball games, with loads of camera angles, players to create and trade, seasons and tournaments to customise, as well as many others. There's also a staggering 85 historical teams for those people who really want to see if the '65 Chicago Bears team could beat the '86 New York Giants. Multi-player gaming is supported, with up to four players able to take part on the pitch at once, and tournament modes allowing eight or even 16 players to compete with their

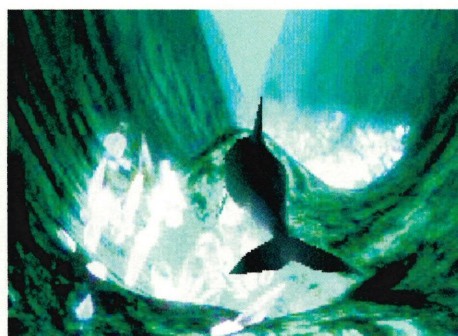


CAMERA ANGLES GALORE, WEATHER CONDITIONS, LOTS OF STADIUMS. MADDEN '98 APPEARS TO HAVE IT ALL.

own teams. In addition there also 39 different stadiums and five different weather effects to give enough different playing conditions which should keep even the hardest to please American football fan happy. And if it doesn't, well, they can just look at the great graphics and great team control engine and hope the finished product will live up to the standard set by its predecessors.



Release : OCTOBER
Company : EA
Price : Tba
Players : 1-16
Genre : SPORTS SIM



Depth

IT'S NOT EXACTLY THE MOST VISUAL OF GAMES IS DEPTH, HENCE THESE SCREENSHOTS ARE A BIT LIMITED. THIS HERE (RIGHT) IS THE MIXING DESK PART.



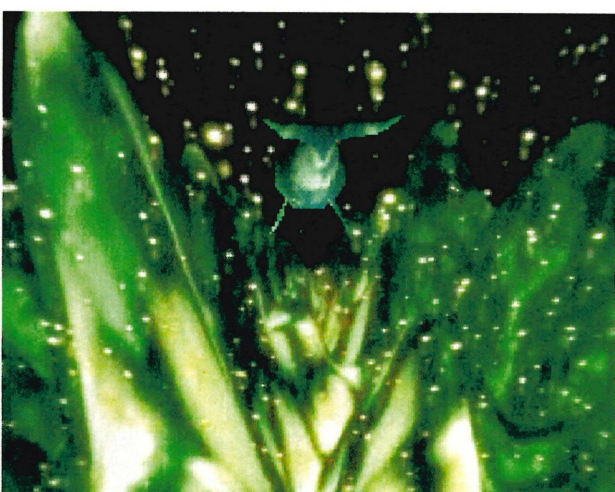
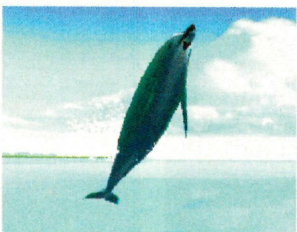
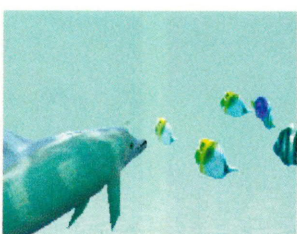
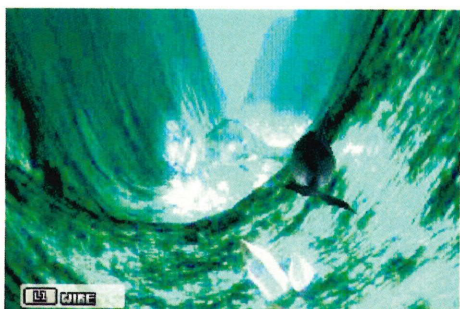
just when you thought *PaRappa the Rapper* was the strangest game you'd seen this year, here comes *Depth*. The latest entry in a (hopefully) ongoing series of increasingly original titles from Sony, it's basically a mixing desk on your PlayStation. By taking control of a dolphin in a 3D world, you swim around and bump into shapes which transport you to a rendered sequence which your dolphin 'swims' through. After exiting, you then swim back to a portal which takes you to the mixing desk (we don't make these things up honestly). Here there are eight different instruments made up of drums and synths, which can be programmed with a selection of

melodies to create your own tunes. The melodies are picked up from each rendered area the dolphin goes through, so the selection builds up as the game progresses. Once a tune has been created, it can then be used as an accompaniment to the dolphin's swimming antics. Mixing the tunes is initially a simple task, but there are a great deal of options to be mastered, such as isolating and altering a melody's volume, balance, reverb and modulation. After a tune has been finished, it can then be saved to a memory card so it can be played whenever you want, and even tinkered with a bit more, should you decide to change your symphony at a later date. The music itself is in a club style (that's dance

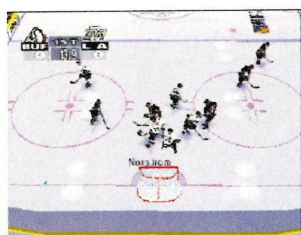
music rather than Vic Reeves singing nonsense) and with the more ambient tunes, the chilled-out visuals (including moving shapes and colours in the background of the mixing desk) and the dolphin, *Depth* looks like it could provide relief from the endlessly frenetic games abounding on the PlayStation.



MORE OF THE MIXING DESK (ABOVE) BUT LOOKY HERE, THERE'S YOUR DOLPHIN (BELOW) AND (RIGHT) A COUPLE OF THE SHAPES YOU NEED TO BUMP INTO.



Release : TBA
Company : SCEE
Price : TBA
Players : 1
Genre : Music



NHL Powerplay Hockey

here in the real world, the most ice we're likely to come into contact with this summer will be on the end of a lolly stick, but the realm of computers pays no heed to climate so it's ice hockey season once more with the forthcoming *NHL Powerplay '98*.

The debut *Powerplay Hockey* ('96, just in case you're counting) was one of the first hockey games to come out on the PlayStation and was a pretty solid game, if not that graphically pleasing. The new '98 version though has some improved 3D graphics as well as the slurry of options and stats which fill the rest of just about every other hockey game CD. Detail is the name of the game here, with

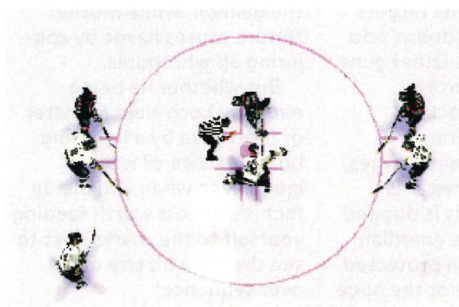
almost every aspect of the game given the 'as-realistic-as-you'll-get-in-a-game' treatment. On the pitch there are the obvious things (motion-captured player animation) and the not so obvious (you can see the overhead lights reflected in the ice, as well as all the players' names on the backs of their shirts). Apart from the graphical frills though, there is a lot of depth in the gameplay itself, with each player having 15 moves to put to use on

the ice. And yes, a couple of them are punch and uppercut, because *NHL Powerplay* has that crucial aspect of all ice hockey games – the on pitch punch-up.

The AI of the players has been improved, so instead of the only decent player on the team being the one controlled by the player, teammates can now be trusted to do their own thing, giving more of a feeling of playing on a team. But if you want human players with you then

up to eight of the blighters can take part in a match, four on each side (sorry, but you can't be the goalie). There's also the now mandatory inclusion of tons of statistics to keep game Statstos happy with details for every player on every team. With all these options it looks like *NHL Powerplay '98* might be moving to the front of the growing crowd of hockey games, but we'll confirm that when we get a review copy in the following months.

WE'RE NOT EASY TO PLEASE, BUT WE DID LIKE THE OVERHEAD LIGHTS REFLECTED IN THE ICE.



Release : OCTOBER
Company : VIRGIN
Price : TBA
Players : 1-8
Genre : SPORTS SIM



Overboard! is a joyously simple game that really takes up too much time. Not because it's drawn out and dull, but because it's so damned addictive. The concept is straightforward: Take charge

of a pirate ship and become the scourge of the seven seas.

Unfortunately you're new to this swashbuckling malarkey and must start from the bottom. Well, the Caribbean anyway.

With the sail hoisted and the crew ship-shape and ready to go, the Atlantic beckons. In the one-player game the aim is to successfully negotiate the treacherous seas, which are initially clouded in darkness. By collecting map bottles an extra piece of the map is put in

place, roughly pointing the player in the direction to the end of the level.

It's never that simple though. Even though *Overboard!* is extremely basic, it's by no means a pushover. Each stage is plagued with sea scum, from rival pirates looking for easy meat, to monsters rising from the depths to attack. Angry villagers are also a threat, but can be easily won over - using force. The galleon is equipped with a handful of weapons, the most useful of

which are broadside cannons. These spit a hail of lead shots to either side when fired, but only have a short range, while the forward-firing cannon is great against targets further away but doesn't do so much damage. Other guns include a flamethrower, mines and even rockets.

Overboard! features 15 sprawling one-player stages, divided into five regions. Each of the realms is dogged by an appropriate guardian, like the Caribbean protected by a giant lobster or the huge

Incan statue waiting at the end of the ancient ruins.

Obstacles are often a bigger headache though. Buzzsaws can slice through the galleon, while Mother Nature causes havoc by conjuring up whirlpools.

But whether its being eaten by Loch Ness Monster or fried alive by a lightning bolt, *Overboard!* is still a laugh even when you die. In fact it's almost worth feeding yourself to the sharks, just to see the truly bizarre game over sequence!

SHOOTING SEAMEN

The *Overboard!* multi-player option is a side-splitting blast. Up to five players battle it out over 15 levels, scooping goodies and using them to sink other boats. And the winner? It's the last one floating, either out-maneuvring the other galleons and using a cannonball to perforate their hull, or by cowering in the shadows in the corner. So what's it to be, captain?



Release : OCTOBER
Company : PSYGNOSIS
Price : TBA
Players : 1-5
Genre : ARCADE ADV



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Kick Off '97

STRANGELY ENOUGH, THE FAMOUS KICK OFF BIRDS-EYE VIEW IS MISSING FROM ITS 1997 UPDATE. NEVER FEAR THOUGH, 'COS IT ALLOWS YOU TO VIEW THE ACTION FROM JUST ABOUT ANY OTHER POSSIBLE ANGLE.

When it comes to history, *Kick Off* is the Stanley Matthews of the videogame soccer scene. It started life as an Amiga game, and was hailed as one of the greatest games for the 16bit machine. The

WRIGHT, WRIGHT, WRIGHT!

The motion-capture duties for *Kick Off '97* were performed by a trio of Arsenal players. Ian Wright, Patrick Vieira and David Seaman were selected to act out all the moves in the game, with Seaman doing the shot-stopping, Vieira selected to perform the defensive actions, and striker Ian Wright on hand to slam a few shots home - no doubt gesticulating wildly at the game's on-screen ref.

reason behind its success? It was fast, furious, and allowed for realistic dribbling as opposed to the customary 'Velcro-Foot' syndrome wherein the ball latches on to the nearest player. It wasn't much to look at, but *Kick Off* played well, and no other soccer game of the time came close.

If *Kick Off* is comparable to Stanley Matthews, the likes of *ISS Pro* and *Soccer '97* must be the PlayStation equivalents of Ronaldo and Shearer. Both are fast-paced and incredible to watch in action. And both make *Kick Off* look as dated as the grainy footage of Matthews at his best. Now however, after a five-year absence from our screens, it has returned, bringing with it



AS WELL AS HAVING AN ESTABLISHED NAME, KICK OFF '97 ALSO BOASTS ALL THE FEATURES OF OTHER SOCCER GAMES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE. NOT LEAST THE OPTION OF CHOOSING REAL-LIFE LEAGUE OR INTERNATIONAL SIDES.

a '97 tag which indicates further updates to come. The *Kick Off* of yesteryear with its tiny sprites and bird's eye view is but a memory, as the series turns to motion-capture and multiple views to bring the old favourite bang up to date.

Kick Off '97 has its feet very firmly planted in the arcade side of soccer sims. The controls are kept to a minimum, with the facia buttons doubling up in their uses for passes, through-balls, tackles and shots. A full complement of international and league sides are on offer,

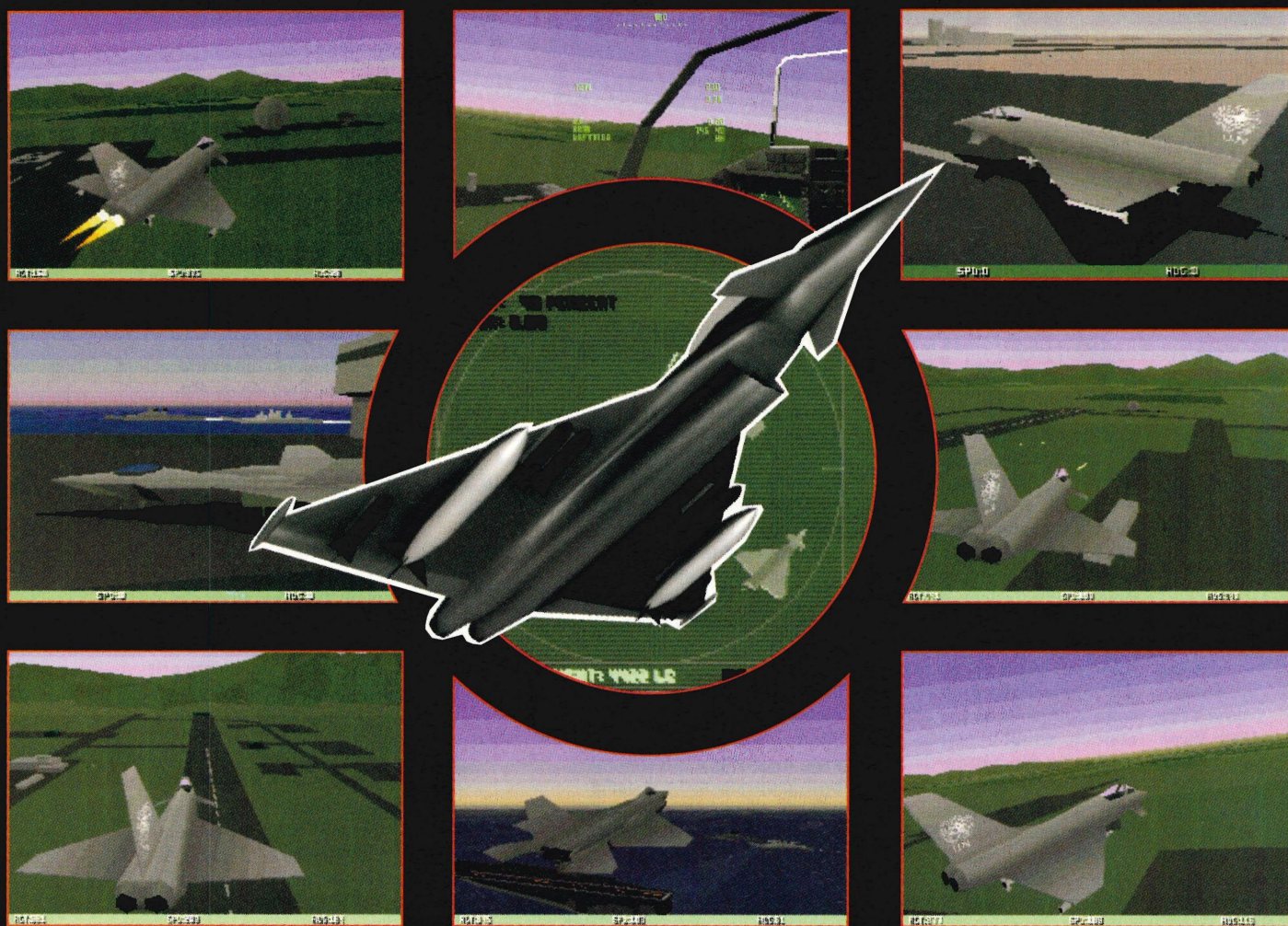
with the majority of new signings to be implemented for the game's September release. The motion-captured sprites can be viewed from virtually any angle, with the player opting for one of four views - although the familiar *Kick Off* bird's-eye view is missing. Maxis has ensured that all existing soccer game bases have been covered, and as such *Kick Off '97* has all the options and content gracing the likes of *ISS* and *Soccer '97*, but hopes the immediacy of *Kick Off '97* will see it snatch the PlayStation footballing crown.

Release : AUGUST
Company : MAXIS
Price : TBA
Players : 1-2
Genre : SPORT SIM

The best Amiga CD ever...

TFX

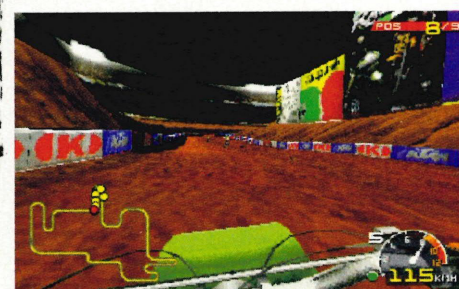
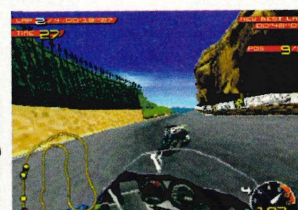
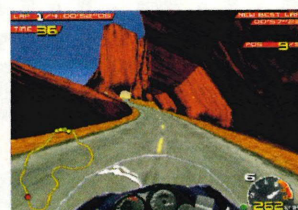
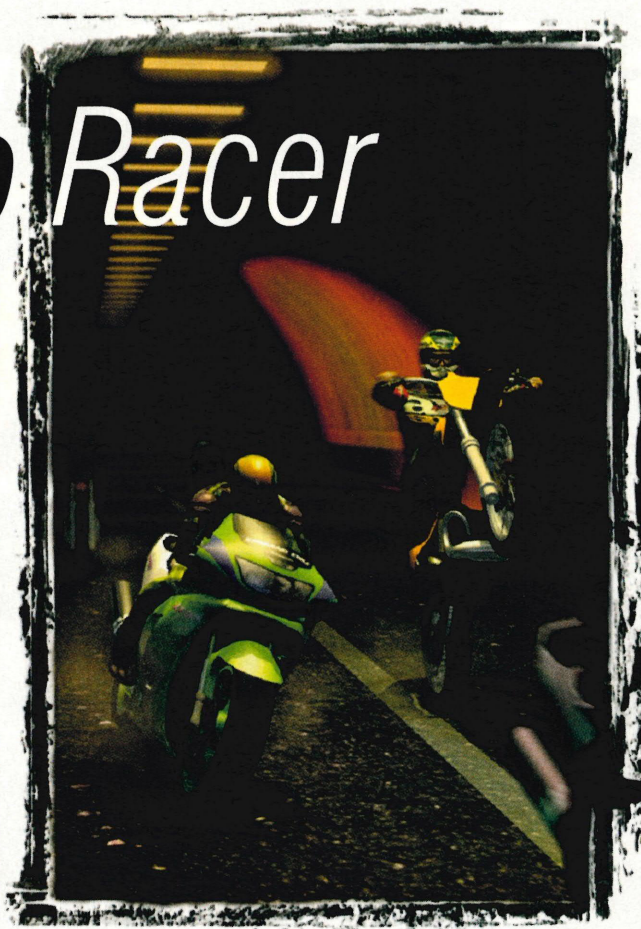
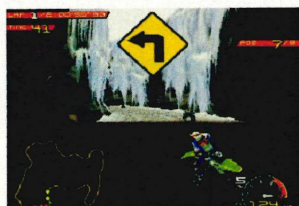
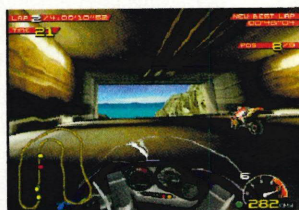
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October issue out 14th September

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Moto Racer



MOTO RACER OFFERS A CHOICE BETWEEN TWO VIEWS, A THIRD-PERSON ONE WHICH SHOWS THE BIKES MORE CLEARLY, AND A DRIVER'S EYE VIEW WHICH IS MORE ATMOSPHERIC, BUT RISES UP (OBVIOUSLY) FOR WHEELIES MAKING IT HARD TO SEE!

If there's one type of game the PlayStation has been crying out for, one gap in the market that hasn't yet been filled, it's motorbike racing.

Erm, OK. Maybe I should qualify that statement: What the PlayStation needs is a half-decent bike game. Some time before Christmas Warner came up with *International Motor Cross*. Apparently this biking title did very well thank you in some countries on the continent, no doubt in places where the sport has ardent followers. Here it disappeared without a trace, probably because it was crap.

French developers Delphine Software International, best known for

producing *Fade To Black*, aim to put this situation right with *Moto Racer*. Already released on the PC, code for the PlayStation has only just arrived in our offices and although many aspects have yet to be finished, the game is already looking tasty. In terms of engine speed, graphics quality and course layout, *Moto Racer* appears to qualify as a superb racer.

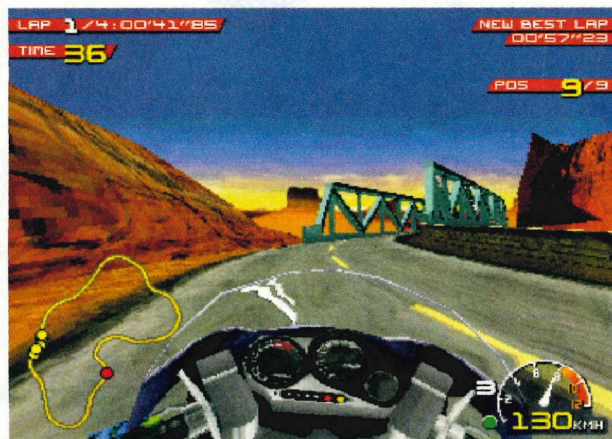
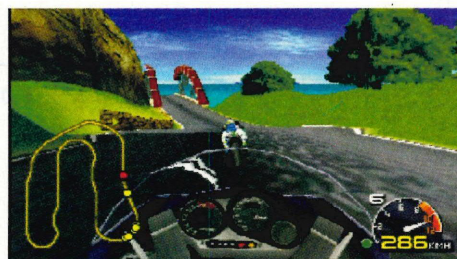
Once completed nine different tracks will be available, allowing the player to race on tarmac, dirt and ice. There will be three modes of play, including a full championship option and the game will offer head-to-head thrills via split-screen racing. Loads of bikes have already been programmed with different characteristics, and some of

MOTO RACER HAS SOME COOL TOUCHES - LIKE THE ABILITY TO PULL A WHEELIE, FOR EXAMPLE.



these, especially the road racers, look like absolute monsters. Two views are being used, one from above and behind, the other right behind the handle bars. Using the first person perspective on road courses gives a superb feeling of realism as you bank hard around corners and open up the throttle on straights. Off-road tracks, on the other hand, throw the player violently about thanks to tons of jumps. Harsh, gritty engine sounds with phasing effects serve to push the experience further, but the most enjoyable feature has to be the ability to recklessly pull wheelies at high speeds. Such silly manoeuvres slam the screen around in convincing fashion and left us in fits of evil laughter.

DIFFERING VIEWS AND COURSE VARIETY COULD SEE Moto Racer MOVING TO THE TOP OF THE MOTORBIKE RACING FIELD. NOT THAT IT'S A BIG FIELD, MIND



Release : NOVEMBER
Company : EA
Price : £44.99
Players : 1-2
Genre : RACING

Frank Miller and Geof Darrow's

HARD Boiled



8UP

SHOOTING
STAR



Intense high-speed shooting action with a techno soundtrack.



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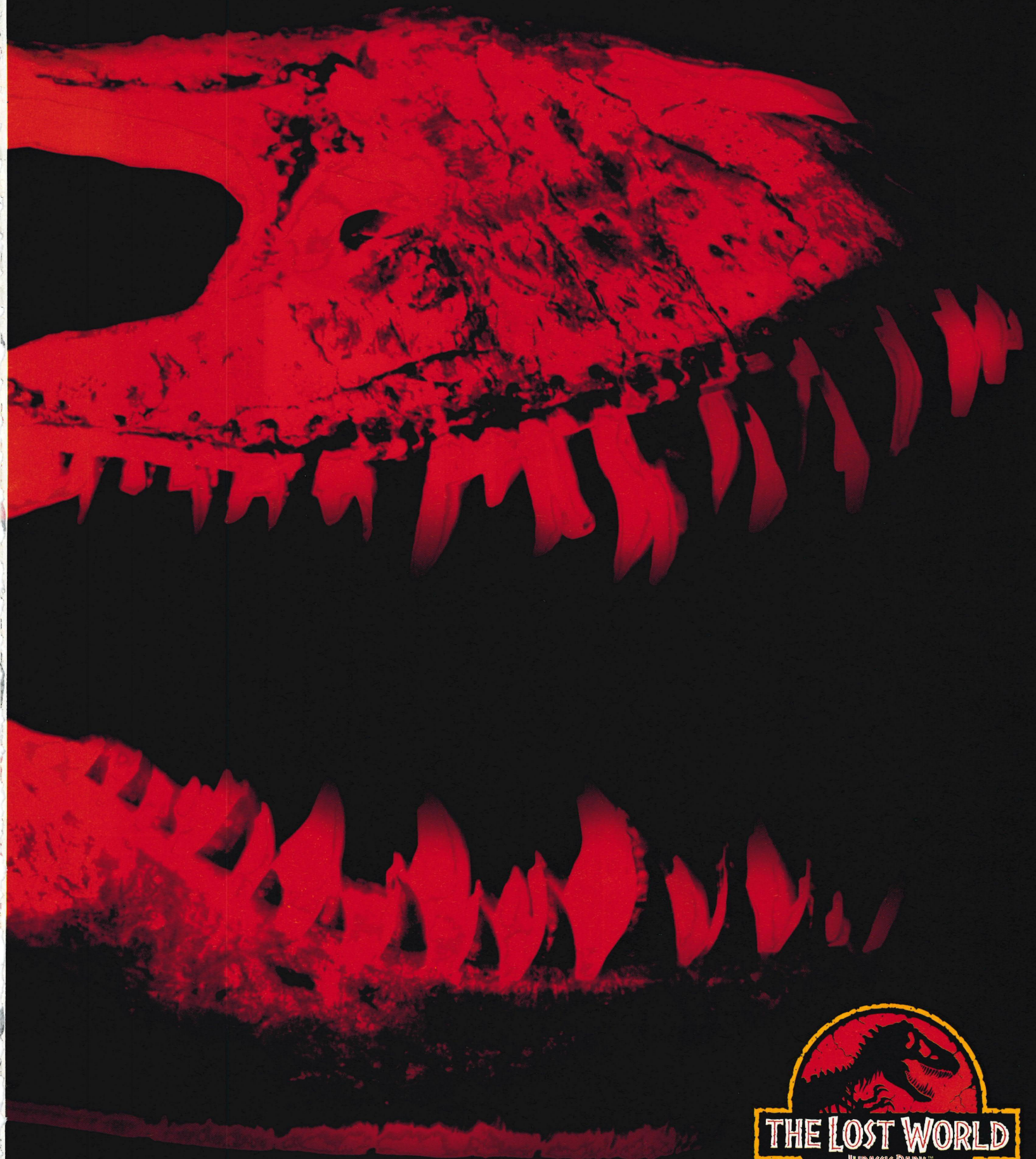


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Syndicate Wars

Guide Pt.2

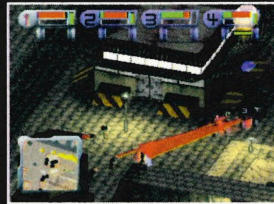
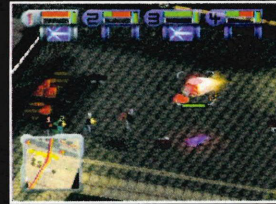
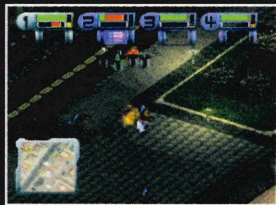


Last issue we quite puffed ourselves out giving you the full guide to first load of Syndicate Wars missions. **This month we've got a whole load more**, plus more weapons, plus cyborg body mod tips. It's all right, don't thank us. **Just get the round in next time we're out.**

EUROCORP MISSIONS

MISSION 6 - PHOENIX

There's a large Zealot base in Phoenix and you have to take it over to gain information about their technology. Unfortunately, there are hordes of punks in the city, so you will have to take them out before you can get to the base. Use your miniguns against them but be careful not to attract too many otherwise you could be overwhelmed. When you've killed enough, make your way to the entrance of the base. There will be a number of Zealots patrolling the perimeter, so take these out first. Then go for the guards at the entrance of the base. Try not to get too many at once. Like the punks, the Zealots may overpower you in great numbers. Once you have done this, enter the base and kill the remaining Zealots. Follow the scanner to locate the technology and make your way back to the evacuation zone in the station. Remember you can also rob the bank on this level for lots of money.



MISSION 7 - ROME

The Unguided have ravaged Rome and laid siege to an enemy syndicate base. You need to rid the city of any punks and their Zealot masters and then take control of the enemy base. Start in the station in the north-west corner of the map and make your way south to the first punk stronghold. Watch for any punks who may accost you on the way. Some Zealots may attack you. Kill them for their Electron Macs. On reaching the stronghold, dispatch the punks then quickly flee as a satellite rain has been targeted on the base. Go east to the second stronghold. There are quite a few punks to kill there and you will be attacked by some Spider Droids the Zealots have sent against

you. Kill them then go north to the third and last punk stronghold. Kill any Zealots you find on the way. Watch for some gas traps in this third base. Lastly, you will need to gain access to the enemy base. You can either blow up the gates or steal a police car from the police car park on the southern edge of the map. There are quite a few syndicate agents in the base, so get your weapons at the ready. Get out of the car as soon as possible so you won't be blown up if it gets damaged. Then make your way south-east and kill the last remaining agents. Look out for some cerberus IFF units that have been laid as defences. Once you have completed these objectives, go back to the station and evacuate.

MISSION 8 - PHOENIX

On this mission, you have to either kill or persuade an enemy syndicate agent. If you persuade him you will be able to add him to your Cryovat for future use. To be able to persuade the agent, you will need twenty persuaded points. Get these from the civilians roaming the city but watch out for any Unguided or Zealots also on the prowl. There are Zealots in the south-western end of the city around the group of three tall offices. There is an empty vehicle to the north-west of the city but it is in an area with a lot of roving punks. They also have High Explosives on their bodies so watch your step. Once you have the car and have persuaded enough civilians, make your way into the base in the north-eastern corner of the city. Be careful, as there are guards patrolling the base. You can spot the enemy agent on your scanner, so go and persuade him. When you do, some Zealots in a flying vehicle will come and fire at you. You will need to have your weapons at the ready for this. Once you have rid the city of all the aggressors, evacuate.

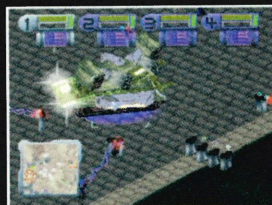


MISSION 9 - NEW YORK

Jennifer Taks needs to be persuaded to return to the Eurocorp fold. She can be found in the elevated compound to the north-west of the map. Start in the station at the north-east of the map and you need to find a vehicle to gain access to the compound. If you look south across the map, you will see an unattended armoured vehicle ripe for the taking. You will come up against heavy resistance, so have the long-range rifles and launchers at the ready to take out the first few attackers and flying cars. Don't go near the flying taxi which lands to drop off enemy soldiers - it's wired to explode. At the armoured vehicle, watch out for a male civilian walking towards the car from the west. Kill him immediately as he is planning to blow up the armoured vehicle. When you've killed him, grab his high explosive before it detonates. Once you have the car, drive to the raised compound. Don't go too far into the compound otherwise you'll draw too much fire. Kill any guards and patrolling flying vehicles. Taks is near a building on the other side of the compound. Make sure you have rid the area of resistance before you persuade her as you don't want her killed. Take the waiting flying Police vehicle and return to the station. The bank on this level contains a large amount of bullion, so raid it if you feel lucky. You may encounter a lot of resistance so make sure you don't drag Ms. Taks into it. Best to perform the raid before you start the mission properly.

**MISSION 10 - CAPE TOWN**

You have to track down and persuade a scientist who is in the Zealot base to the north of the city. You land near the slums and you are under attack from the start. Kill all the aggressors and make your way to the east end of the Zealot compound. Blow a hole in the wall, being careful not to kill the target, and kill off any Zealots you find with long-range rifles. Then persuade the scientist and make your way to the station.

**CHURCH OF THE NEW EPOCH MISSIONS****MISSION 6 - ROME**

This mission is similar to the Syndicate Level 7 which is set in Rome. Start in the station in the north-western corner of the map. You need to make your way south to stamp out the first stronghold of punks. As soon as you leave the station, you will be set upon by some punks, so try and wipe them out before continuing. When you get to the first stronghold, watch your step as the punks possess KO gas. Once you clear the area of Unguided, you will be attacked by syndicate forces, some in a flying vehicle. Dispatch these then make your way east to the next Unguided site. The third site is on the northern edge of the map. These punks have ion mines, so be careful. Once this stronghold is cleansed, go east and rid Rome of of the Unguided. A satellite strike will be called once you have killed the punks, so evacuate quickly. The final target is the syndicate base to the south-east of the map. You need to steal a vehicle to get there so go to the police station on the southern edge. Take the car and drive into the base. Watch out for syndicate patrols and get out of the car as soon as its energy is low. Kill all the syndicate agents and the level is complete. Use the police car to return to the station and evacuate the city. There is a Hard Skin mod hidden in a warehouse by the three chimneys in the syndicate base.

**MISSION 7 - BUENOS AIRES**

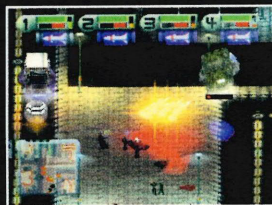
The Church of the New Epoch needs to regain control of this city. You start in the station near the north-western corner of the map. The syndicate has two bases in this city, one to the east and one to the south of your starting position. There are a lot of flying cars patrolling this level, so try to take these out first. You will need to



storm each base with everything you've got and the battle will be long, hard and very bloody indeed. Try goading the syndicate into coming out of their bases. This way you can bottleneck them around a building or into a large patch of lethal razor wire which should take care of them. Either way it is going to be a pretty hard struggle. As soon as you run out of energy for one weapon, switch to another and don't let them get too far in range. You can try using the cover of the buildings to let loose with your flamers. The less syndicate that can fire at you at any one time, the better. Once you have finished this bloodbath, evacuate from the city. Then you can have drink and salute fallen comrades.

MISSION 8 - SANTIAGO

Many of the survivors from the Buenos Aires massacre have fled to Santiago so you must follow them there and end their misery. For this mission, you will not need to venture onto the island in the centre as all your targets are scattered around the edge. Unfortunately, there are a lot of them, so be on your guard. Have your long-range rifles at the ready to dispatch some before they get in range and then use your launchers and other weapons against them. There are police vehicles roaming the skies so keep an eye out. The Zealot temple is guarded well, so make your way to the entrance cautiously. There are cerberus IFFs at the gate along with KO gas traps. The guards inside the base have high explosives on their bodies, so kill carefully.

**MISSION 9 - CAIRO**

This is an assassination mission requiring stealth as well as speed. You must kill an important syndicate official about to board a shuttle in the city. You are flown in near where the official is boarding his flight. He is protected by a large group of syndicate agents so you will need to find a better way of getting to him. Take out your long-range Rifles and head east to the edge of the map. Then go north and keep out of sight of the agents. Look on your scanner where the official is and then, once he's in your sights, kill him. Once you have done this, quickly run back to the station and evacuate from the city. You don't want to be caught this time.

**MISSION 10 - BAHRAIN**

Eurocorp is preparing an assault on the Zealot stronghold of this city. You start in the station in the north-eastern corner of the map. The road next to the station will take you straight to the syndicate agents if you follow it west but the best way to do this level is to use a tank. If you go south, then you will come to some of your fellow Zealots guarding a tank. Enter the tank then make your way north west to the bridge. Don't start firing at the syndicate agents until you are over the bridge otherwise they will fire explosives and destroy the bridge with you on it. Wander through the city killing all who try to oppose you but keep an eye on the health of the tank. You will need to get out of it fast if it gets too low.



WEAPONS

Here goes with the rest of the weapons, continued from last month. All these you'll encounter at some point during your adventures in the missions detailed here.



ELECTRON MACE

This lightning whip gun is twice as powerful as a minigun, making it as powerful as the pulse laser. Since the laser is cheaper, you might as well ignore this weapon.



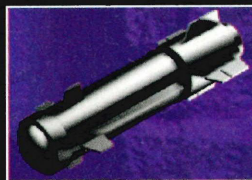
PULSE LASER

This beam weapon has a better range and damage than the minigun, but the firing rate is slower. In a fight against miniguns, it'll be a fairly close call.



CERBERUS IFF

A great weapon for ambushes and defending bases, once laid this auto-sentry will mow down anything that comes into its range. Takes time setting up.



NUCLEAR GRENADE

This mini-nuke will destroy anything within its radius. Simply throw and run. And we mean run. The grenade will explode as soon as it hits a solid object.



LAUNCHER

A mini rocket launcher which does incredible damage. It drains a lot of energy, and the firing rate is quite slow. These should be used as long range support weapons.



AUTOMEDIKIT

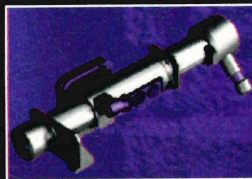
The big brother of the medikit, this saves on hassle by activating itself automatically. Drains energy slightly though, so it can cut down on your firepower.

CLONE SHIELD

A Mission Impossible device: The Clone Shield will allow you to disguise yourself as an ordinary citizen to avoid detection. Essential for the first part of the final mission (don't worry, you'll know when you get there).

MEDIKIT

While agents have slight healing powers as well as body shields, it's good to have this. The medikit can only be used once, but it will heal your agent completely. Make sure that each member of your team is always carrying one.



PLASMA LANCE

A replacement for the trusty minigun. This does huge damage at a great range. Expensive though, so it'll be a while before you can equip your team with it.



GRAVITON GUN

This is one of the best weapons in the game. A very slow firing rate stops it from being perfect, but for large-scale destruction from the hip, this is hard to beat.



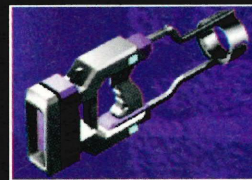
PERSUADERTRON II

This sequel to the persuadertron has huge brainwashing power. New Epoch agents can now be persuaded straight away, making things a lot easier.



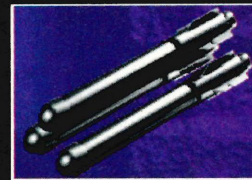
STASIS FIELD

Time warp! Anyone caught in its field will be trapped in a bunch of red rings. Inside the field, time slows down making movements incredibly sluggish.



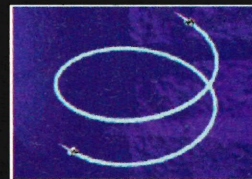
DISPLACERTRON

Sends the target into the future, meaning you can drop a mine so the enemy reappears on top of it or call in a satellite rain strike and move yourself before it hits.



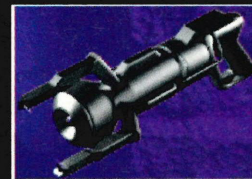
SATELLITE RAIN

Pinned down? Then call in this orbital air strike. After activating the weapon, wherever you were standing and the area will become a blaze of heat and light.



TRIGGER WIRE

A more deadly twist on the razor wire theme, trigger wire is as hard to see and explodes when touched. It does a lot more damage and has the effect of acting as an early warning system.



CHROMOTAP

Expensive, but useful. The chromotap sucks bio-energy out of corpses and gives the user health. But be careful, while this process is going on it weakens your agent's shield.

Small tips

CYBORG PARTS

While it's always good to have a hefty gun in one hand and a nuclear grenade in the other, weapons aren't the only optional extras. Buying extra body mods for your agents is always a good idea. Every new part gives your agents a higher health level, but all of them have their own special bonuses that they can give to your agents.



BODY

You can't buy any other mods until you've got the cybernetic body. Primarily it acts as body armour, but it also increases stamina and weapon energy.



LEGS

These will increase walking and running speed, and the amount of time your agents can run. Essential for getaways, and the first thing to pick up after a body.



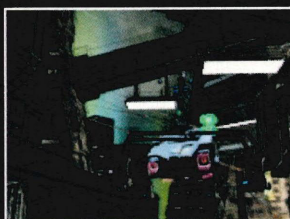
BRAIN

This is incredibly useful mod to have, giving bonuses to per-suadertron range, shield power, shooting accuracy, perception, healing and reaction time.



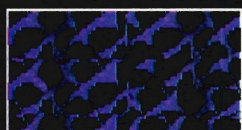
ARMS

As well as increasing the throwing range of grenades and bombs, arms can also increase shooting accuracy if the agent is using drugs at the time.



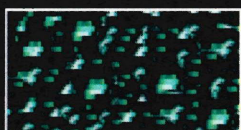
SKIN

Skin mods are very useful, and therefore tricky to get hold of. They have to be found on certain levels. Only one skin can be worn at a time, and their effects are as follows:



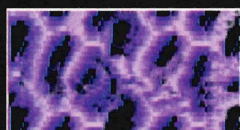
LEVEL 1 - HARD SKIN:

This halves damage from kinetic weapons such as Uzis, Miniguns and LR Rifles, as well as structural debris from explosions.



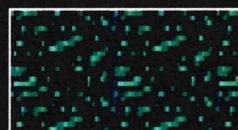
LEVEL 2 - FLAME SKIN:

Absorbs three quarters of fire damage from a weapon like the flamer as well as explosions and, of course, normal everyday fire



LEVEL 3 - ENERGY SKIN:

Absorbs about fifty per cent of the damage from plasma lances, pulse lasers, electron maces and the deadly graviton guns.



LEVEL 4 - STEALTH SKIN:

A very useful skin which makes it hard to be targeted by enemies since they will find it difficult to make you out. Hence the 'stealth' tag.



RESIDENT EVIL

EASY WAY TO KILL THE PLANT

The best way to kill the plant is to get in close and use the knife! Sounds crazy, but it works and it saves you ammo!

FROGMEN TRICK

When you re-enter the house about halfway through the game, giant frog-type men will try and attack you. DON'T aim your gun at them immediately, as this will cause them to attack you at once. Instead you should wait until they get close, and then let them have it.

DARKLIGHT CONFLICT

CHEAT PASSWORD

Enter this password: HDVMKXVCK. This will send you to the final campaign with a #1 high score. If you then place your cursor on 'start new mission' at the main menu and press left, you'll see a 'choose a mission' message and you can access all of the missions.

WCW VS THE WORLD

ACCESS HIDDEN FIGHTERS

Enter "League Challenge" and defeat each league. At the end of each league defeat the boss character and you'll be able to play as him in most modes. Defeat all the leagues and you'll see a new league appear. Beat this new league and you'll get two more hidden wrestlers. Start a league challenge and fight with a JR class fighter. After winning all 6 divisions with the same fighter you'll fight your first hidden fighter. If you beat him you will enter the Super JR and you get to fight another hidden one!

SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER 2

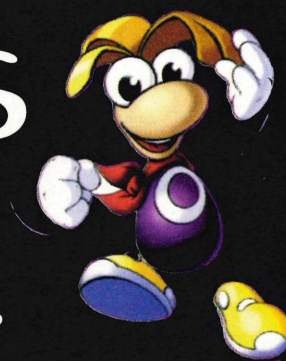
PLAY AS AKUMA

To play as Akuma, go to the Character Select screen, highlight Morrigan, then while holding SELECT, press DOWN, DOWN, DOWN, BACK, BACK, BACK, and then any button.

PLAY AS DEVILOT

You can play as Devilot by using a similar method to that used to access Akuma. Again, highlight Morrigan, hold SELECT, then press BACK, BACK, BACK, DOWN, DOWN, DOWN, wait for the timer to reach 10, then press any controller button.

Platinum tips



We've fair gone Platinum crazy. Here you'll find a whole load of tips for some of the £19.99 games you might have missed, and on page 98 we tell you which of the new releases are worth a punt. Go on, knock yourself out.

WORMS

NEW WEAPONS

At the Weapon Options screen, press X+Square 10 times.



RAYMAN

BIG RAYMAN

After the Ubi Soft logo appears, press and hold L1, L2, R1, R2. Keep these held until the animation of the brick wall appears. Continue to hold these buttons and press Start. Keep holding down everything including START, then release the lot when the screen goes black.

EXTRA CONTINUES

When you've lost your last man and are down to two or fewer continues, press Start to continue your game, then press Up, Down, Right, Left for 10 free continues.

FULL POWER-UPS AND 99 LIVES

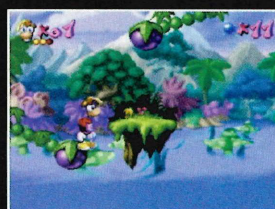
While playing, pause the game and hold R1 + R2 + L2. While holding these buttons, press Circle, Right, Square, Left, Circle.

PASSWORDS

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 99 Lives - | XNB9FM!Z2? |
| Finished Music - | J5VLP58VB |
| Finished Mountains - | J5K!ZZC8MD |
| Finished Caves - | SM!KV7WSXD |
| Access to Space - | Mama - T64H5M! ?BB |
| Access to Skops - | ?2MC9J!GTB |
| Finished Image - | SX2!ZP58MD |
| Freed all Electroons and 99 lives - | 492kv3w9xd |
| All but Final - | SD3BKFOOMN |

PICTURE IN PICTURE

For a simulated Picture-in-Picture view of the screen, pause the game and press Circle, Circle, Left, Circle, Circle. You may need to hold R2 while doing this.



WIPEOUT

FIRESTAR TRACK

Get the hidden track by highlighting "One Player" on the main menu and hold L1 + R1 + Right + Square + Circle + Start. Press X to select the option that appears.

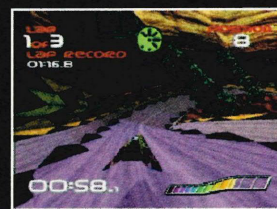
SLOWER RACES

After a race is loaded and you're zooming to your car, push the open button on

your PlayStation. This will slow the game down, but don't forget to close the cover at the end of the race.

RAPIER SHIP

To access the hugely cool ultra-fast Rapier class highlight "One Player" on the main menu and hold L2 + R2 + Left + Select + Start. Press X to select the option that appears.



DESTRUCTION DERBY

ACCESS EXTRA TEAM

At the piracy warning screen, press L1, Left, Circle for the Reflections team.

CHEAT NAMES

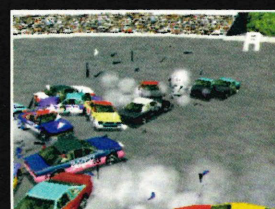
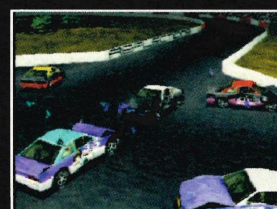
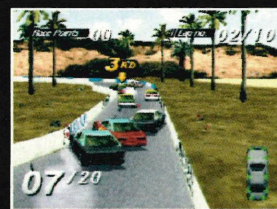
To access some secret cheats, simply enter any of these names as your own and then play the game.

Invulnerability !DAMAGE!

Choose number of opponents NPLAYERS

Ruined Monastery Track REFLECT!

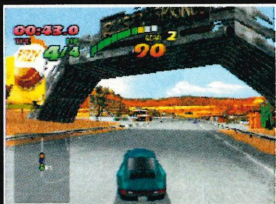
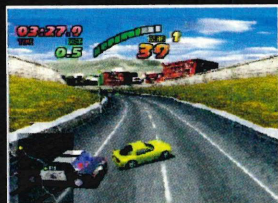
Other cars are damaged DERBYMAN



NEED FOR SPEED

CHEAT MODE

To enable the cheats below, select Tournament Mode and enter the password "TSYBNS".



DESERT SPRINGS

To race in the desert, hold L1 + R1 while selecting the Rusty Springs track.

LUNAR SPRINGS

To race on the moon, enter the password "MQKZCL" or use the cheat code above. To finish, hold L1 + R1 + Triangle while selecting the Rusty Springs track.

MACHINE GUNS

Choose Head to Head mode, then immediately after choosing your opponent's car hold Up + Left + L1 + Square + Circle until the race begins.

RIDGE RACER MODE

For a Ridge Racer style of play, hold L1 + R1 while you select the number of laps you want.

ROAD RALLY MODE

To go off-road, hold L1 + R1 while selecting any track except Rusty Springs. This code replaces the pavement with dirt.

WARRIOR CAR

To race in the Warrior Car, enter the Bonus Track code, then exit tournament mode and hold L1 + R1 when selecting a car.

ALIEN TRILOGY

LEVEL SELECT

At the password screen, enter "G0LV1" followed by the level you desire. (i.e., "G0LV12" for level 12.) The words "Cheat Enabled" will appear if you've done it properly.

ULTIMATE CHEAT

For all weapons, invincibility, unlimited ammo and access to every level, enter this password: "1G0TP1NK8CIDBOOT-SON".



LOADED

EXTRA AMMO

For extra ammunition, pause the game and hold L1 + L2 for 10 seconds. With these buttons held, press Down, Right, Circle, Left, Right, Circle. From here on you can refill your ammo by pausing the game and selecting the Ammo option that appears.

EXTRA LIVES

Get a life (or ten) with this code. Pause the game and hold L1 + L2 for 10 seconds. With these buttons held, press Left, Down, Right, Triangle, Square, X, Circle.

FREE BOMBS

With enough firepower, this game is a blast. To get your fill, pause the game and hold L1 + L2 for 10 seconds. With these buttons held, press R1, R2, X, Triangle, Square, Circle, R1, R2, Circle, Circle, Square.

HEALING

To heal yourself, pause the game and hold L1 + L2 for 10 seconds. With these but-



tons held, press Right, Right, Left, Down, Down, Up, Triangle, Circle. From here on you can heal yourself by pausing the game and selecting the Health option that appears.

LEVEL SELECT

Pause the game and hold L1 + L2 for 10 seconds. With these buttons held, press Up, Right, Down, Left, Triangle, Circle, X, Square, X, Triangle, Square, Circle.

LEVEL SKIP

Slip past the warden with this trick. Pause the game and hold L1 + L2 for 10 seconds. With these buttons held, press X, R1, Triangle, R1, Square, Circle, R2, R2, X, Square, Triangle, X.

WEAPON POWER-UP

Pause the game and hold L1 + L2 for 10 seconds. With these buttons held, press Down, Right, Down, Right, Triangle. From here on you can power-up by pausing the game and selecting the Power option that appears.



FIFA '96

LOADS OF CODES

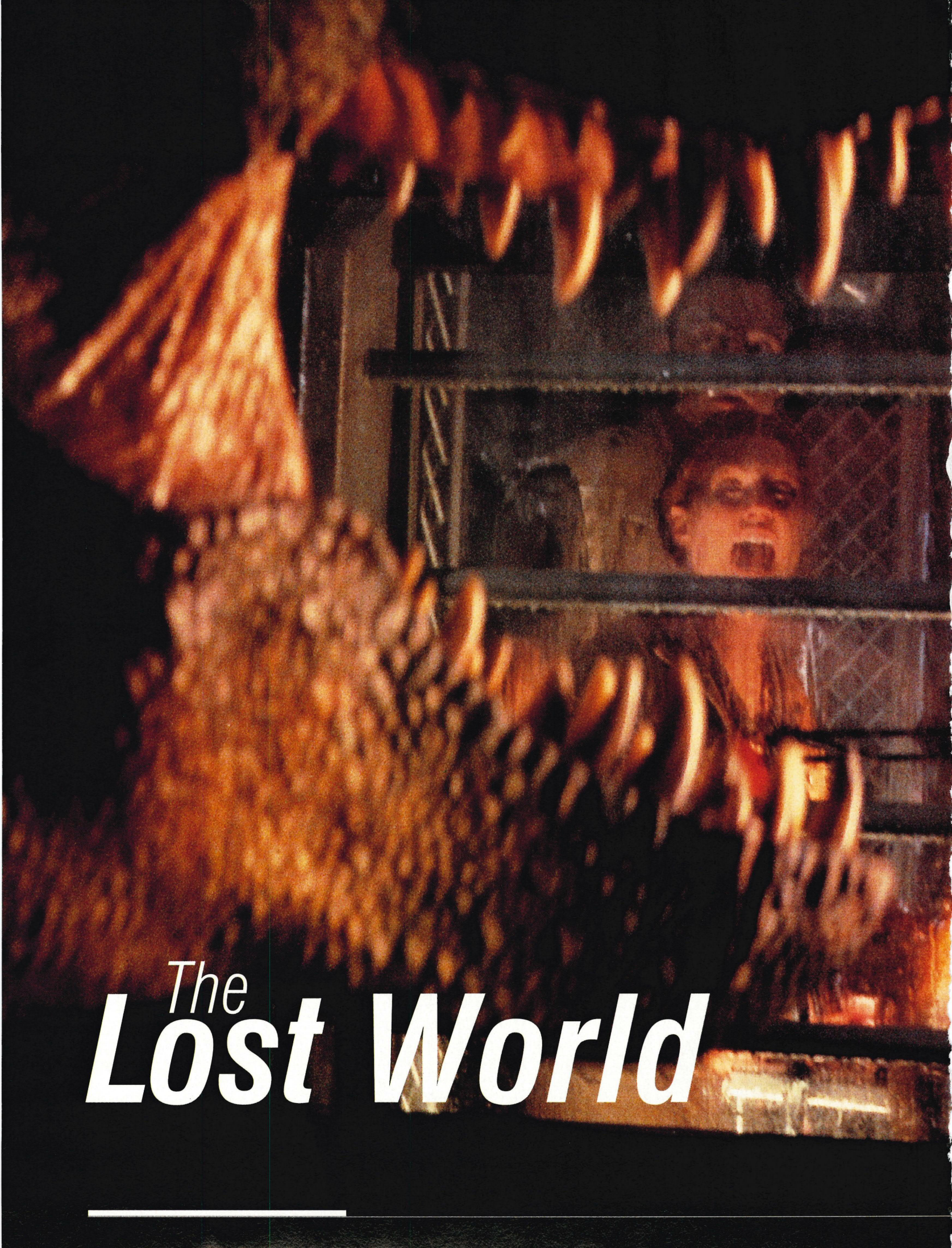
Enter these codes while the game is paused. After you've entered the desired code, leave the Options menu and highlight "Resume Game". Press Square and it will appear. Now start a new game to enable the cheats you've selected.

SUPER OFFENCE: Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Triangle, X
SUPER DEFENCE: Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, X, Triangle
SHOOTOUT: Square, Triangle, Square, X, Square, Triangle
INVISIBLE WALLS: X, X, X, Triangle, Square, Square, Square, Triangle

CURVE BALL: Triangle, Square, X, Triangle, X, X
CRAZY BALL: X, Square, Triangle, X, X, Triangle, Square, X
SUPER POWER: Triangle, Square, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle
SUPER GOALIE: Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle
STUPID TEAM: Square, Triangle, X, Square, Triangle, X
DREAM TEAM: Square, Square, Triangle, Triangle, X, X, Square, Square

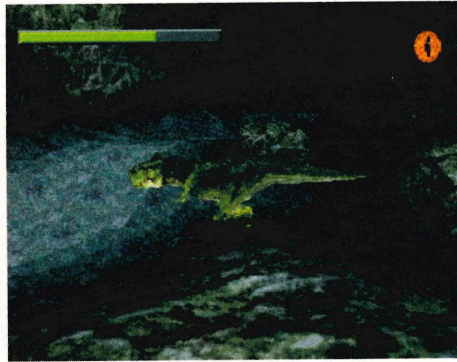
SECRET INTRO

While the game's intro is playing, press Square, Triangle to view some bonus intros.



The
Lost World

RATHER THAN FOLLOWING THE FILM'S PLOT THE LOST WORLD ALLOWS PLAYERS TO TAKE CONTROL OF CENTRAL CHARACTERS IN LIFE AND DEATH STRUGGLES.



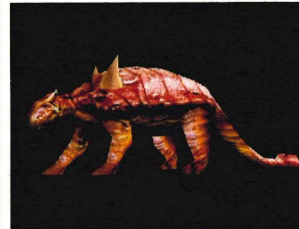
a cute young Compsognathus squeaks and yelps as it darts among lush ferns, trying to catch dragonflies. Suddenly a razor claw cuts neatly through its stomach, spilling entrails across the damp forest floor. As the Velociraptor lifts the morsel to its deadly jaws a shot rings out and a nine millimetre shell shatters its brain cavity. Posing for a photograph, the human hunter rests one boot on the limp reptilian body, just as another foot, armed with massive bloody talons, comes crashing down on his body. Welcome to the merciless food chain that is... *The Lost World*.

HOLY PLOTS

A plot full of holes, poor editing, the odd muppet special effect, corny lines and a cast more wooden than an Ikea desk-set made *The Lost World* film a poor man's sequel to *Jurassic Park*.

Never mind. Introducing new dinosaurs, adding buckets more blood and gore and concentrating on battles for survival means the film contains the perfect recipe for a videogame. Add this to the fact the programming team were given special access to materials used by Steven Spielberg and the result must surely be a surefire, action-packed winner.

The storyline follows along



Release : SEPTEMBER
Company : EA
Price : £44.99
Players : 1
Genre : PLATFORM



HOW TO MAKE A GAME

During the first couple of months of pre-production of *The Lost World* game, brainstorming sessions threw up ideas for everything from environments and inhabitants to basic elements of gameplay. Boffins sat around tossing various ideas about and eventually some sequences found their way onto videogame storyboards which in turn made their way to the finished game. Dinosaur models were based on the latest scientific information regarding posture and muscle structure. Colouring came down to artistic licence, but even here animals alive today were used for inspiration. Simple sketches were the starting point, then skeletons were mapped out, muscles layered over the top and finally detailed skin textures added. Vermilion Flycatcher clicks, Beluga Whale songs, baby Jaguar grunts and people blowing through long lengths of plastic tubing were some of the sounds used for the game. Samples were digitally messed about with and combined to produce convincing prehistoric roars and shrieks. In total a staggering 1,400 sounds were designed this way for the game.

NAME: COMPSOGNATHUS (ELEGANT CLAW)

Size: 40 ins

Weight: 7 pounds

Period: Late Jurassic, 156 to 145 million years ago

Found: France, Germany and Bavaria

Diet: Insects and small vertebrates

Agile but very weak and small. Some attacking skills, including a running claw slash, but best equipped to jump and dart out of trouble or hide. Overcoming lesser opponents, such as *Staurikosaurus* and *Dimorphodons* builds killing instincts.



NAME: HUMAN HUNTER

Size: 6 ft 4 ins

Weight: 210 lbs

Period: 35,000 years ago to present

Found: Europe, North and South America, Asia, Africa, Australia

Diet: Omnivore

Lacking much natural protection or weapons, *Homo Sapiens* must rely on machine guns, flamethrowers and grenades to overcome carnivores. A grappling gun can also be shot off to winch hunters out of tricky situations.



much the same lines as the film: *Jurassic Park* has failed. An attempt to open a giant dinosaur safari park has proved science shouldn't mess with the fundamentals of life. Nature is untameable etc. Ah, but where was the stock for this prehistoric extravaganza bred? Well, some of the process was taking place in a small lab which formed part of the ride around *Jurassic Park*, but this

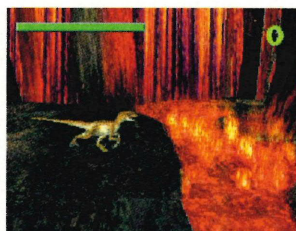
wasn't enough to fill an entire island. Site B is the key. On an island close to the original site, called Isla Sorna, families of every conceivable dino have been left to multiply to their hearts content. Sounds like a rather obvious recipe for disaster.

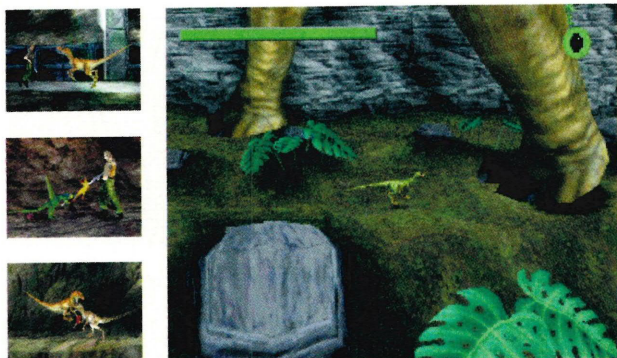
LIFE AND DEATH

The Lost World game revolves around the life and death struggles of the film's central

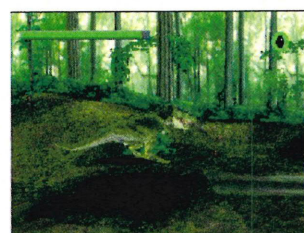
characters. To begin with players get the chance to guide a Compy through hazardous environments filled with unlikely looking platforms. Small and medium-sized dinosaurs block a safe passage, but there are also levels where the giant feet of a migrating herd of *Brachiosaurus* have to be carefully avoided. True to current trends an underwater section has also been included.

Humans are later thrown into the mix when a hunter becomes hero. Equipped with a grappling gun allowing swings and lifts, game-style changes slightly, but not a whole lot. One question here: how do they make extinct creatures appear so realistic, while human anima-





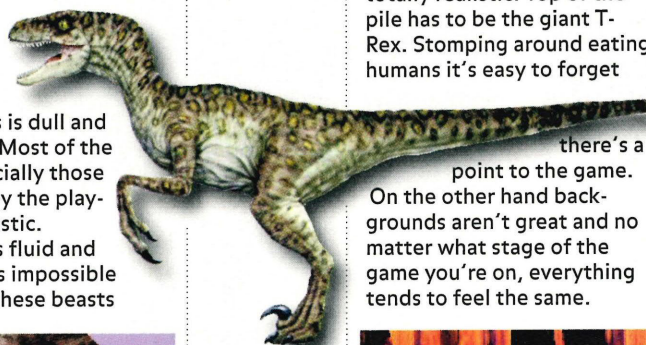
(LEFT) COMPY LEVELS MIX BETWEEN PLAYING STYLES. HERE THE PLAYER MUST RUSH BETWEEN THE FEET OF A MIGRATING HERD OF MONSTERS.



tion is totally artificial? Beats us. Raptors and T-Rexs are the most fun to play around with. Decent attacks make the game less frustrating, and the addition of human prey to chew up lends a whole new dimension in gore. Last in the chain is a scientist, who's a big disappointment. She's weak and has all the same weapons as the hunter, consequently these last levels are bastard

hard to complete.

The Lost World at times looks stunning but at other points is dull and uninspired. Most of the dinos, especially those controlled by the player, are fantastic. Animation is fluid and although it's impossible to say how these beasts



SOME OF THE CHARACTER ANIMATION IS NOTHING SHORT OF AMAZING, BUT THEN THE TEAM DID HAVE ACCESS TO FILM SETS AND MODELS.



WARNING...

The following comments may well spoil your enjoyment of *The Lost World* if you haven't yet seen the film.

BITS OF THE LOST WORLD WORTH THE ADMISSION PRICE:-

5. Awesome equipment. Mercedes jeeps with extendible sides, oversized dart guns, trucks with fold-down arms and air sacks to bag beasts.
4. T-Rexs pulling poor little humans apart. Good guys torn limb from limb, hunters are shaken like dolls, generally gore levels are high, so how did it get a PG rating?
3. A loony riding his motorcycle full-pelt between the legs of a huge dino. Top marks for realistic computer graphics for this sequence.
2. Hunter squished by T-Rex. Stomping on him was painful enough, but as Rex lifts his foot we see the hunter struggling on the sole like an animated gob of chewing gum.
1. Heart attack thanks to Raptor poking his nose under the hut just as characters think they're safe. Unfortunately the only section guaranteed to make the audience jump.

REFUNDS PLEASE FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:-

5. Crap cute baby Stegosaurus that Sarah Harding pets. When characters set foot on the first island in *Jurassic Park*, the effects were huge. This time round Jeff bumps into a reject from the muppets.
4. Most of the plot - holier than emmental and much more cheesy. How did Sarah Harding get found so easily? How did the team avoid injury from the falling trailer? How did the T-Rex do damage on the boat? How....
3. Gymnastic little Miss Goldblum and that barn scene. Rather than setting up elaborate parallel bars, why couldn't this precocious brat have just been handed to the Raptors on a plate?
2. Wooden Jeff Goldblum, who never gets chewed up and spat out. He's been pretty rubbish in a pile of other flicks, such as *ID4*, but here he's less convincing than a Conservative manifesto.
1. Sickening ending where dinos live in peace and harmony. A big fuss is made about these creatures being territorial, yet the closing shot shows them all mucking in together. Wimp out.

LOOKS FAMILIAR

Gameplay follows along similar lines. Routes do split off from the main path, so action isn't completely linear.

Sometimes the thrust will be to run away from beast, in other sections it'll be all-out war or time to negotiate tight platforms. Each of the characters behaves in a unique way, although controls for all are a bit sluggish.

moved, the effects seem totally realistic. Top of the pile has to be the giant T-Rex. Stomping around eating humans it's easy to forget

there's a point to the game. On the other hand back-grounds aren't great and no matter what stage of the game you're on, everything tends to feel the same.





NAME: VELOCIRAPTOR (SWIFT ROBBER)

Size: 6 ft long

Weight: 300 lbs

Period: Late Cretaceous, 85 to 80 million years ago

Found: Mongolia, China and possibly Russia

Diet: Meat

One of the most efficient killing machines developed by nature. Alert and highly mobile, Raptors are capable of cool leaping slash attacks, which dispatch humans quickly, and have a sharp set of dentures for biting moves.



NAME: TYRANNOSAURUS (RULER LIZARD)

Size: 40 ft

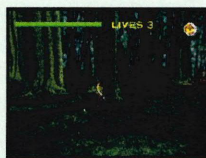
Weight:

Period: Late Cretaceous, 68 to 65 million years ago

Found: Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, South Dakota, Western Canada and possibly China.

Diet: Meat

Every school boy's favourite bag of bones, Mr T is a huge lumbering monster specialising in power moves. Ducking his head down he's perfect as a battering ram. Huge jaws clamp hard on prey, which can then be flung about or swallowed.



NAME: SARAH HARDING (DAFT SCIENTIST)

Size: 5 ft 5 ins

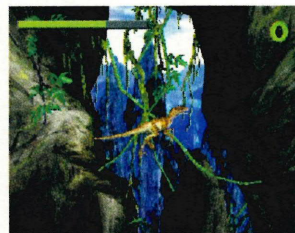
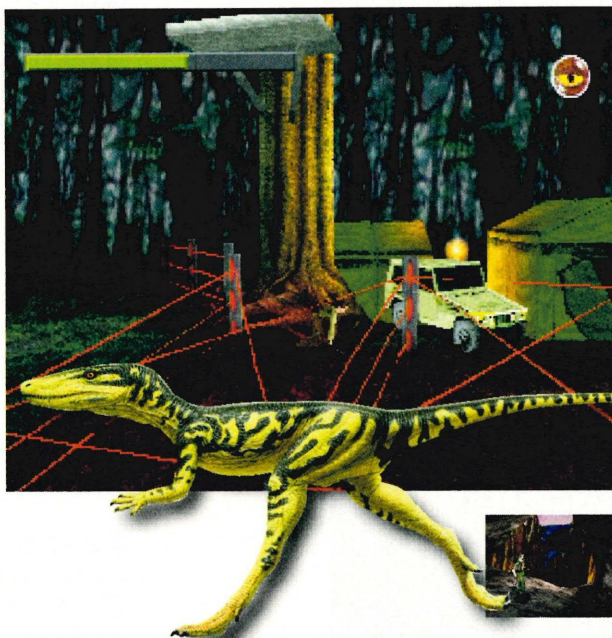
Weight: 170 lbs

Period: About the last 30 years, honest.

Found: Petting baby dinos on Isla Sorna

Diet: Probably

Not much going for this rather weak individual. Slow, incapable of jumping very high and dies very quickly. Like the hunter Sarah can get tooled up with various guns and carries a grappling device. Tough work getting her through levels.



Opinion Similar in play style and feel to *Pandemonium*, *The Lost World* lacks the same kind of colourful effects and level of imagination which made that 3D platformer such a hit. Well-animated dinosaurs and the odd bit of fern do benefit from access to original Spielberg resources, but backdrops and gameplay are without depth. In the end it's fair to say the game suffers from the same lack of direction that dogs the film. It's not a throw-back but it's also no giant evolutionary step.

JM



(LEFT) COLLECTING DNA STRANDS OPENS UP AN OPTION AT THE END OF STAGES WHICH ALLOWS ARTWORK TO BE VIEWED.

(RIGHT) MR T REX IS THE MOST FUN TO CONTROL. HE'S GOT A THROATY ROAR, CHOMPING TEETH AND A FREIGHT TRAIN CHARGE. MIND YOU HE LOOKS SILLY WHEN HE JUMPS.



DNA strands need to be tracked down and other pickups increase your level of aggression. Despite all these different ingredients, it always seem like you're doing the same things. Once you realise this about the only incentive to carry on is to get your mitts on the king of lizards. One real bone of contention is the save system, which only kicks in if

you complete whole sections. Very poor.

Apart from a few niggles *The Lost World* has quite a classy air about it, from the cool, understated intro to the chilling cut sequences. Plenty of hard work has obviously gone into the project and you're unlikely to feel cheated if you rush out and buy. It's just that nothing about *The Lost World* grabs you buy the throat and shouts in your ear PLAY ME!

PSP RATING...

Graphics : 83

Animation : 87


Sound FX : 92

Music : 88

Lastability : 78

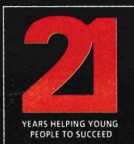
Playability : 81

81



THERE'S
A CHARITY THAT
WANTS MORE PEOPLE
TO SUFFER
LIKE THIS.

YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT SONY HAVE INFLICTED THEIR NEW SAMPLER ON AN UNSUSPECTING PUBLIC.
POWER SOURCE CONTAINS: TOMB RAIDER, PORSCHE CHALLENGE, MONSTER TRUCKS AND DESTRUCTION DERBY 2.
YES, YOUR THUMBS WILL HURT, YOUR BRAIN WILL HURT, BUT YOUR SOUL WILL BE PURE. ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE PRINCE'S TRUST.



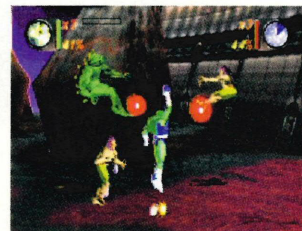


The Fantastic Four

DASTARDLY DR DOOM IS UP TO HIS OLD TRICKS AGAIN AND IT'S UP TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR TO STOP HIS NEFARIOUS PLAN. OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

There have been video games based on the likes of The Avengers, The X-Men, The Incredible Hulk and Spiderman, but never yet has there been a real Fantastic Four adventure – which is all the more surprising when you consider the said super-powered quartet were the same team that established the Mighty World of Marvel way back in the mists of 1961.

Acclaim has taken it upon itself to set things straight with this four-player beat 'em up featuring all four of the original line-up plus special guest star, She-Hulk, as well as a host of Marvel supervillains for them to duke it out with. Probe



Software (of *Die Hard Trilogy* and *Alien Trilogy* fame) has handled the game's design and coding, and based the game's plot on episodes from the second season of The Fantastic Four animated TV show.

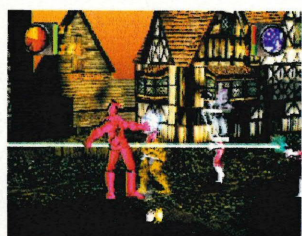
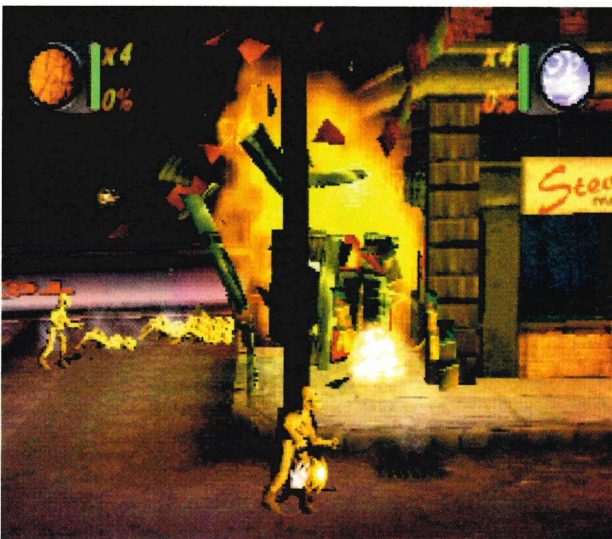
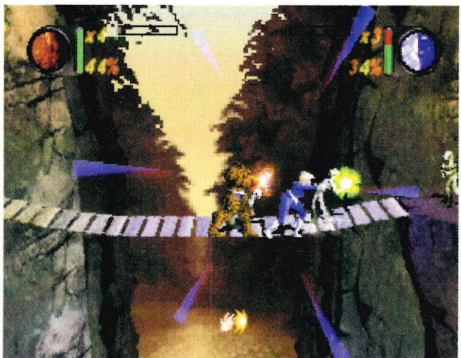
What we find is this. The Fantastic Four's long-time arch-enemy, Dr Doom, is building a time machine which will give him the ability to rule all worlds in all dimensions, and thus conquer the entire universe at a stroke. But construction of the machine has been stalled by the lack of certain vital components which are to be found at obscure locations throughout the galaxy.

Doom's plan is to transport the Fantastic Four to these locations and trick them into unwittingly finding the components for him. And, if all goes according to plan, they will meet their demise in the process.

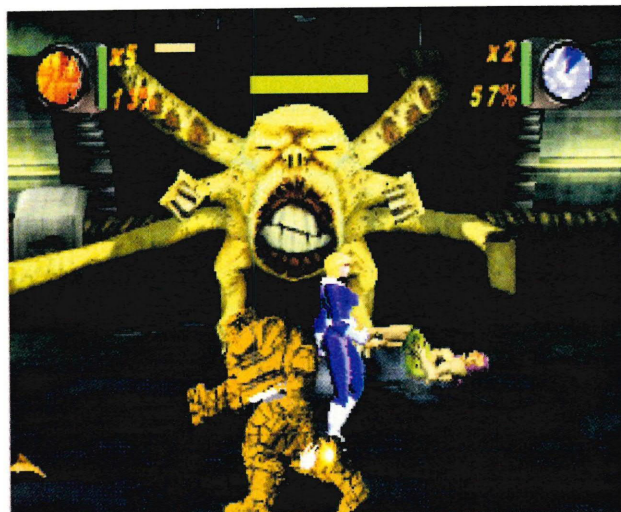
FANTASTIC FOUR-PLAYERS

Before you can get into all that though, you have to start by picking the character, or characters, you want to play as. With a multi-tap plugged in, up to four players can take on the roles of their favourite Fantastic Four heroes. On the other hand, single players can pick a character then put the others under CPU control. Thus you can choose to work with a partner or lead a whole four-some into battle.

Each character has the same range of basic moves – punching, kicking, jumping and throwing objects around the screen – as well as their own special abilities activated by simple button combinations. So it's no surprise to find The Human Torch's special moves are all flame-



Release : AUGUST
Company : ACCLAIM
Price : £34.99
Players : 1-4
Genre : BEAT 'EM UP

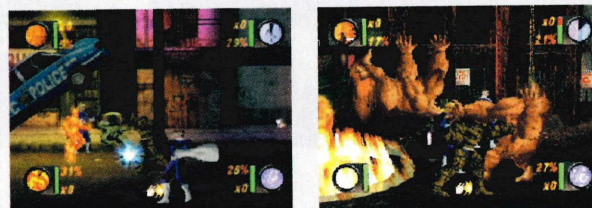


CURSES. JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE, ALONG COMES AN ANT-LIKE CREATURE WITH MICK JAGGER LIPS.

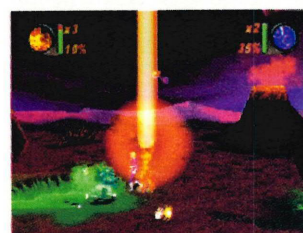


STREET FIGHTER - FF STYLE!

If mastering your character's four special moves is causing you problems you might try out *Fantastic Four's* training mode. Here, you and your pals, embodied by your chosen heroes, appear on a New York street where you get to try out your powers on each other. There's no scoring system or time limit or bouts or any of that rubbish - you can just keep going until you doze off.



HULK SMASH! ER, WRONG COMIC. ANYWAY, THIS IS THE BIT WHERE YOU GET TO PRACTISE SPECIAL MOVES - ON EACH OTHER NO LESS.



STARTING ON THE DANGER-INFESTED STREETS OF NEW YORK, THE FANTASTIC FOUR MUST BATTLE THEIR WAY THROUGH FIVE LEVELS ALL FIT TO BURST WITH DOOM'S HENCHMEN.



based, while The Thing and She-Hulk rely on their immense muscle power. Invisible Woman can - wait for it - render herself temporarily invisible but she relies on her ability to manipulate force fields to defend herself. And Mr Fantastic uses his stretchy morphability and his skill with weapons technology to clear the way.

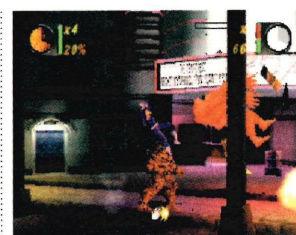
When the game gets going it turns out to be a scrolling fighting game, reminiscent of certain old Capcom coin-ops, like *Final*



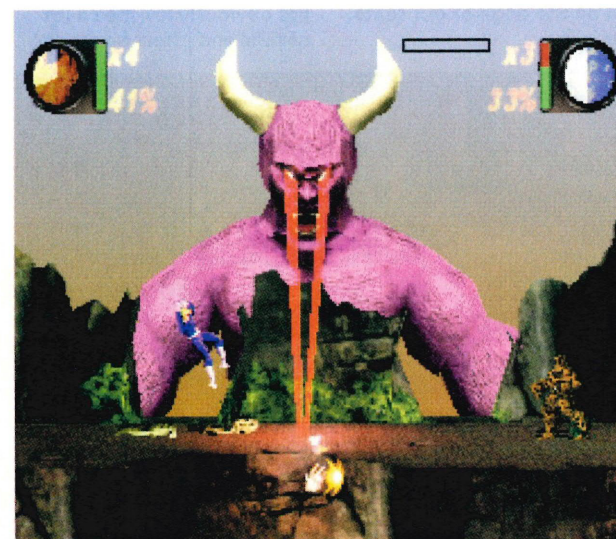
Fight or Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. The players start at one end of a horizontally-scrolling scene and have to fight their way to the other end, smacking out the lower forms of hostile life, picking up life-restoring power-ups and smashing down obstacles as they go. At certain points in the level the heroic quartet are confronted by some kind of boss who can't be defeated with mere fisticuffery and needs special treatment.

Although there are only five levels in the game they're all made up of several separate stages so as far

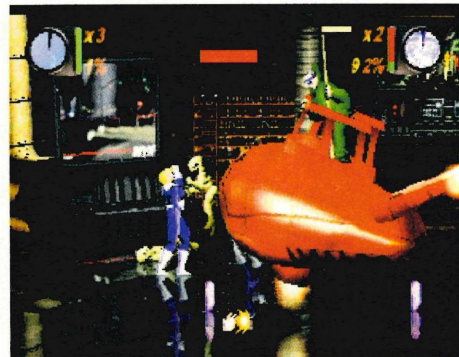
as content goes, *Fantastic Four* is quite substantial. The game opens on a New York street which positively swarms with evil moloids, the troglodyte servants of subterranean menace, Moleman. Then it's into the Microverse, where the Fantastic Four are deposited on the danger-packed surface of SubAtomica, where Psychoman lives. After that they are transported to the



homeworld of the Skrull where they must do battle with the shape-shifting Super Skrull. Doom then returns the FF to Earth,

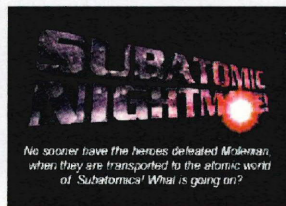


ALL THE FUN OF BEING BOTH FANTASTIC AND FOUR CAN BE SLIGHTLY SPOILED WHEN THE BOSS CHARACTERS ARRIVE.

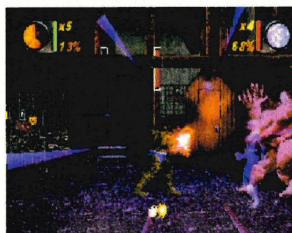


NOT WIPEOUT

One of the most bizarre features of *The Fantastic Four* is this... 'game' that appears when you're waiting for the next part of the mission to load. It's a diddy little racing game in which all four players fly mini-spacecraft round and round the track until they eventually win... somehow. No doubt someone thought this was a pleasant bit of whimsy that would jolly up those between-level moments, but alas, they were wrong. It's a pointless waste of time which has nothing to do with the main game and simply interferes with what little atmosphere has been generated up to that point. What's worse is that because the game has to access the CD several times during a level this racing non-extravaganza pops up annoyingly frequently. Please, guys at Probe, don't try this again.



**PUNCH, JAB
THWACK, KICK.
GOOD FOR A
BIT BUT
THERE'S ONLY
SO MUCH THE
AVERAGE
GAMER CAN
TAKE.**



Opinion Marvel are usually so pernickety over the quality of products bearing their moniker, so we can only scratch our heads and wonder why they gave the OK to this. As well as throwing out character likenesses, Probe has ejected any attempt at an involving story. You're rushed from one level to the next, and sometimes you walk off the screen to find yourself mysteriously confronted by Dragon Man or Ice Man. You end up plodding from one to the next, enduring gameplay that is bearable but repetitive - even dealing with the bosses is the same throughout. If I had to be generous I would say that you do get quite a lot of game for your money, but I'm sure I'm not the only gamer who prefers quality over quantity.

PG

delivering them into the halls of Atlantis, populated by mutant sea creatures which serve the sinister Attuma. Should they survive this subaquatic horde, the Fantastic Four enter the final level, where they confront the evil genius who has masterminded their adventure, Dr Victor Von Doom himself. And then the scene is set for the final punch-up likely to have us all on the edge of our seats. Or is it...

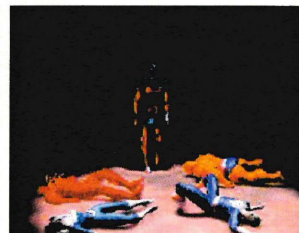
FF VS. POWER RANGERS

With so many renowned characters punching each other's lights out, this probably sounds like some kind of fantastic Marvel thrillathon comic fans dream of. The truth is somewhat different.

For a start off, the whole look of the game seems wrong. Rather than trying to evoke the look of the Fantastic Four comics, Probe has obviously lavished a lot of time and effort on render-

ing backgrounds and creating 3D models of the characters, which, by and large, look awful. Gone are the dynamic poses and classic Marvel artwork style. Instead we get faceless, rigid reproductions who skate around (because the walking animation doesn't match their speed of movement) fighting knock-off copies of various villains who look more like badly-costumed baddies from Power Rangers.

The action is mildly inter-



esting, but it's hard to imagine even the loopyest of FF fans getting excited about repeatedly turning Mr Fantastic into a large cube, or getting the Invisible Woman to throw giant Invisible Balls. It's the lack of variety that makes it all so dull. Walk along. Hit guys. Bad guys all gone? Walk along some more. Endure the dodgy loading game while next bit loads. Find boss. Throw objects at boss until boss dies. Repeat. Zzzz...

**A WHALE
FIGHTS AN
ORANGE MAN
WHO LOOKS
LIKE HE'S
MADE OUT OF
BRICKS. THIS IS
AS GOOD AS IT
GETS, FOLKS.**



PSP RATING...

Graphics : 60
Animation : 50
Sound FX : 79
Music : 59
Lastability : 60
Playability : 59

59



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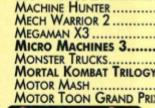
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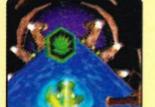
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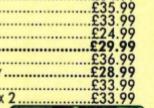
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TOKYO

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WILD ARMS'
POLISHED PRE-
SENTATION
INCLUDES A
GREAT
ANIMATED
SEQUENCE
FEATURING ALL
THE THREE
CHARACTERS.
NEEDLESS TO
SAY, THEY
LOOK NOTHING
LIKE THIS IN
THE GAME.



an RPG starring two blokes, a lass and featuring a mix of technology and magic. Do I speak of *Final Fantasy VII*? I do not. Sony's new role playing game *Wild Arms* might not be arriving with as much fanfare as Squaresoft's forthcoming opus, but it does continue the tradition of PlayStation RPGs which is: Not making them often, but making them great. After Konami's excellent *Suikoden* and *Vandal Hearts*, it's now Sony's turn to have a crack at what is (in Japan at least) one of the most popular genres around. Filled with tons of puzzles to solve, monsters to fight, and whole worlds to explore, RPGs can be among the most engrossing and hard to put



down games around. And with *Final Fantasy VII* coming this Christmas, it looks like their popularity will be increasing even more. But can *Wild Arms* fill the gap between now and then?

PLOT AND STUFF
Wild Arms, in common with most Japanese RPGs, has something of an epic plot, with the usual array of characters fulfilling their destiny, discovering the power within themselves, blah blah blah. This kind of stuff is usually hideous and derivative, but *Wild Arms* gets around this by giving you three great characters to control, each with their own individual storyline. At the start of the game,



you're given the choice of controlling either outcast Rudy, Jack the treasure hunter, or Cecilia the magician princess. You then take the chosen character through a short quest before leaving them and taking over control of another. This not only gets you used to the system of play, but also eases you into the background and plot.

And what a lot of plot there is. Put as simply as possible the world of Filgaia was once ruled by Guardians who disappeared after fighting off a demon invasion. Thousands of years later the Guardians have become myths, and the demons are trying to invade the planet again. Our heroes join the

Guardians to stop the demons getting hold of magical artifacts they need to revive their leader, Mother, who was sealed, supposedly for all eternity, by the Guardians.

What this requires is a lot of travelling and random monster encounters until arriving at a town which is explored before going to the local dungeon to carry out part of the quest.

While this might sound dull to anyone who's never played an RPG like this before, be warned *Wild Arms* is an incredibly addictive game. Not only is it huge (this is a game which really uses the CD) and eminently playable, it also contains a



Release : OUT NOW
Company : SONY
Price : TBA
Players : 1
Genre : RPG



COMBAT IS MADE A VISUAL FEAST THANKS TO BRILLIANT LIGHTING EFFECTS AND GIANT MONSTERS.



whole host of features which make the game even more of a joy to play. For instance, one timed section involves racing through a burning town trying to save all the citizens and get them to the safety of a castle.

Another is when Cecilia is sent to her room in the castle (no, we're not kidding) and has to run and find a secret passage, avoiding all the guards. These little set pieces, as well as such scenes as a fake wedding, and a whole host of mad fairground games to play in one town, mean *Wild Arms* has much more to it than the normal ingredients of running about, fighting and the cutesy graphics which characterise Japanese RPGs.

RPG GENIUS

With its nicely drawn and animated graphics, *Wild Arms* manages to be an RPG which actually shows off the power of the PlayStation. All the characters are solid-looking sprites, and backgrounds are varied. But it's during combat things really start looking good, with everyone drawn in 3D polygons, and the dramatic camera movements and lighting effects making for some great battles, particularly when the huge enemy bosses show up, and the characters call on Guardians to help them. The resulting mighty monster battles are something to behold.

Combat is also very easy to pick up, and includes an automatic attack system whereby you can choose your character's fighting style and then leave them to get on with it. This system is good for those who aren't into the combat side of things, but to get the most out of the game it's better to choose your



FIGHT!

The combat system in *Wild Arms* has a lot of things going for it. Not only is it easy to handle, but thanks to the characters' special skills and runes, there are tons of special attacks which look great, and do some real damage too. Here's a few of the most spectacular ones.



STOLDARK

His name is Stoldark, and he is a giant turtle. Don't ask why, it's an RPG thing.



FENGALON

This giant cat flings bolts of light at the enemy. But looks very odd.



VALKYRIE

Great big balls of energy! That really hurt! Cool!



LOCK ON

Once Rudy's got you in his sights, he can't miss.

Opinion Wow. After a bit of a drought on the RPG front, there seems to be a regular avalanche of top quality titles on the PlayStation. This is truly the first RPG which shows off the machine's power, and bodes well for the future. If *Final Fantasy VII* is better than this, then there's going to be massive brain meltdown across the country. If you're not into RPGs then you're missing something special by not picking this up, if you're a fan then this mag is about to be dropped in the next 10 seconds while you run off and buy this. Well, what are you waiting for?

DB

own attacks manually. This ease of play is also seen in the magic system whereby you can carry any spell you want as long as you have a scroll. The menu screens are also easy to read, with a help key always on hand to explain objects and menus and plenty of options including a screen saver and even the chance to redesign the style of the windows and cursor in the game. Now this is all well

and good, but you'd think they might have included one to turn the music off. This isn't because it's bad - in fact some of it's excellent - but just because it's a constant presence which can eventually piss you right off.

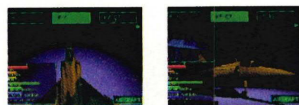
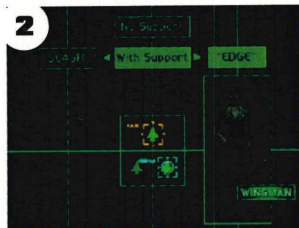
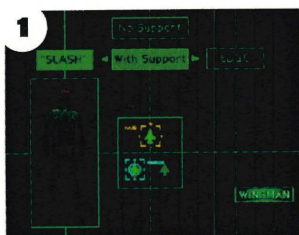
Wild Arms is also quite a linear game, but this matters little because the story is such a great one. And extremely playable, exciting and with a long lifespan to boot. Epic in every sense of the word, this is a game which shows that RPGs aren't dull and slow. Perfect for both beginners and veterans, the only role player which looks likely to beat it this year is Sony's *Final Fantasy VII*. So that's the RPG market sewn up by them then.



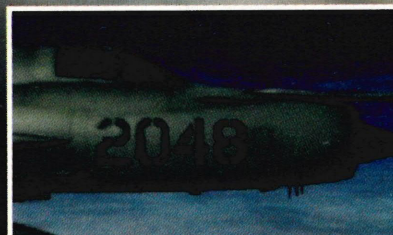
PSP RATING...

Graphics : 85
Animation : 80
Sound FX : 75
Music : 84
Lastability : 90
Playability : 92

91



Air Combat 2



(1-2) ABOVE.
AS YOU CAN
SEE, WHEN IT
COMES TO
CHOOSING
WINGMEN IT'S
THE BATTLE OF
THE ROCK
BANDS. DO
YOU PLUMP
FOR GUNS 'N'
ROSES' SLASH
OR U2'S
EDGE?

Shoot 'em up it says, and yes, *Air Combat 2* is most definitely a shoot 'em up your dad would like.

In short, it's the thinking man's blaster with search and destroy elements carefully balanced with a bit of tactical stalking and flight-sim brain stretching. What's more, it combines airborne carnage with its own version of *Fighter Jets-R-Us*, allowing the successful player to buy bigger and better planes once missions are complete – a kind of *Rage Racer* of the skies, if you like. Progress further and wingmen become available and you get to choose exactly how they can help on each mission. So if you like a good dogfight then get your wingman to take out the main target while you stalk, circle and destroy.

PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE

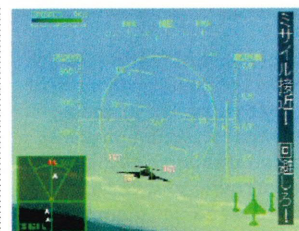
To owners of the first game, the overall gameplay will already be familiar. However,

the sequel's biggest improvement is the amount of missions on offer. Almost twice as many, meaning the limited playing time is no longer a problem. As a member of the crack Scarface squadron, the player's job is to help overthrow a military coup d'etat.

Naturally, this is going to take more than harsh language and involves completing a series of tactical sorties. This could mean, say, attacking some kind of compound on the ground which will be your primary target. Of course, the enemy don't just sit back and let you do it, so they deploy their own jets to counter your attacks and will also use ground-based weapons in an attempt to put

mucho caps in your ass. To you and me all this means is loadsa levels with loadsa baddies to kill and tons of things to blow up. Cool.

The levels themselves are gorgeously detailed. And while this isn't immediately apparent with earlier missions seeming to consist of seas, sea and more sea, the later sorties take place over harbours, cities or in the middle of canyons which use the graphics to quite superb effect. Nevertheless, this isn't the sort of game that has you gawping at the scenery. In between controlling the aircraft and hunting out and destroying the enemy your mind will be on other things.



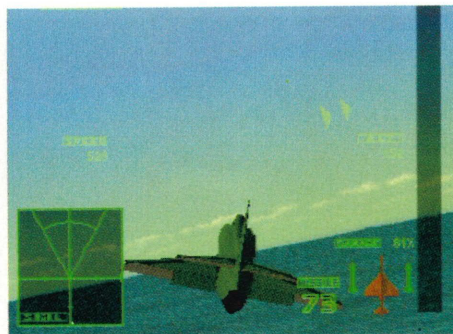
Like the 30 tasks ahead of you, for example. *Air Combat 2* eases the budding Biggles into the fray with an easy-peasy first mission but it's quality time this though, so don't waste it. It's needed to get the hang of controlling your jet which needs to be handled with kid gloves. I'm not a pilot, so don't ask me if it's just like flying the real thing, but it soon becomes



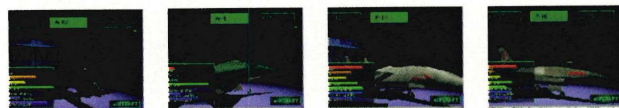
Release : OUT NOW
Company : NAMCO
Price : Import
Players : 1
Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP



AIR COMBAT 2
ALLOWS YOU
TO PLAY FROM
EITHER INSIDE
THE COCKPIT
(LEFT) OR OUT-
SIDE (RIGHT).
BOTH HAVE
THEIR USES,
BUT WE FOUND
THE INSIDE
VIEW BETTER
OVERALL.



Opinion For reasons already detailed, this won't be everyone's cup of tea, but if you like a bit of thinking with your blasting then look no further. *Air Combat 2* has missions galore - each different from the last and each a new challenge. It has the extra attraction of being able to add to your arsenal by buying more jets and it keeps the excitement levels high. Yes, you're as likely to die by stalling and crashing than by enemy fire, but that's all part of the fun. Perfect entertainment for those looking for that little extra something from their shoot 'em ups. **AH**

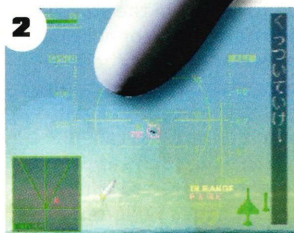
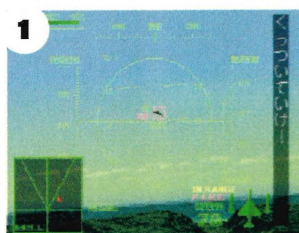


apparent your airborne arsenal responds to the usual laws of physics and dynamics. This is where the 'thinking man's shoot 'em up' bit comes in, since if you're the kind of impatient cove that likes to pick up a game and get straight into the action, *Air Combat 2* won't be your cup of tea. Try turning to hare after an enemy jet and unless your speed is right the engine will stall, sending you into a dive and, in the initial stages at least, you better get used to the sight of sea rushing up to meet you.

Once flight has been mastered, however, some of *Air Combat's* faults become glaringly obvious. Received wisdom at PlayStation Plus towers is that the jet won't turn as sharply as it should, because the plane won't bank at a 90 degree angle. It's a shame this, since one of the game's strengths is its 3D environment and the limitations of flying mean you don't get to take full advantage of it.

GO FOR BULLY'S BONUS

Still, this is a shoot 'em up after all, and if the flight element is left wanting the blasting bit should make up for it. The key to airborne combat here is stealth. An on-screen radar gives early



(1-3) LEFT.
ALL THE
THRILLS OF
DOGFIGHTING
ARE HERE.
GET THE VIC-
TIM IN SIGHT.
LOCK ON, FIRE
AND... BINGO!

warning of oncoming foe who will, no doubt, shoot past you, bank and sneak up from behind. Your job is to do it to them before they do it to you, and you're helped by lock-on missiles as well as a machine gun to cope with the bad guys at short distances. Again, impatient gamers need not apply, because knocking off even one baddie can be time intensive. Once you think you're successfully tracking your target, sod's law he then speeds off in another direction. Even with a seemingly

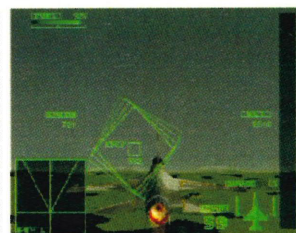
successful missile lock-on targets have a habit of banking out of range. This dogfighting lark's not easy.

The stealth and the stalk of the fight may seem slow at first, but soon becomes an operation of almost clinical precision. And take it from me, there's nothing better than the screen's 'Bullseye!' message as you finally rid the skies of a MiG that's been dogging you for ages, leaving you to circle once more, go for that primary target, complete the level and buy a better plane.

ANALOGUE PAD - WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY

Oh joy, *Air Combat 2* works with the analogue pad. Extensive comparison tests conducted under laboratory conditions showed that it works better with this pad. It's that analogue precision, see. It makes turns, climbs and dives easier to perform and when it comes to tracking enemy craft, keeping them in your sights becomes less of a hassle.

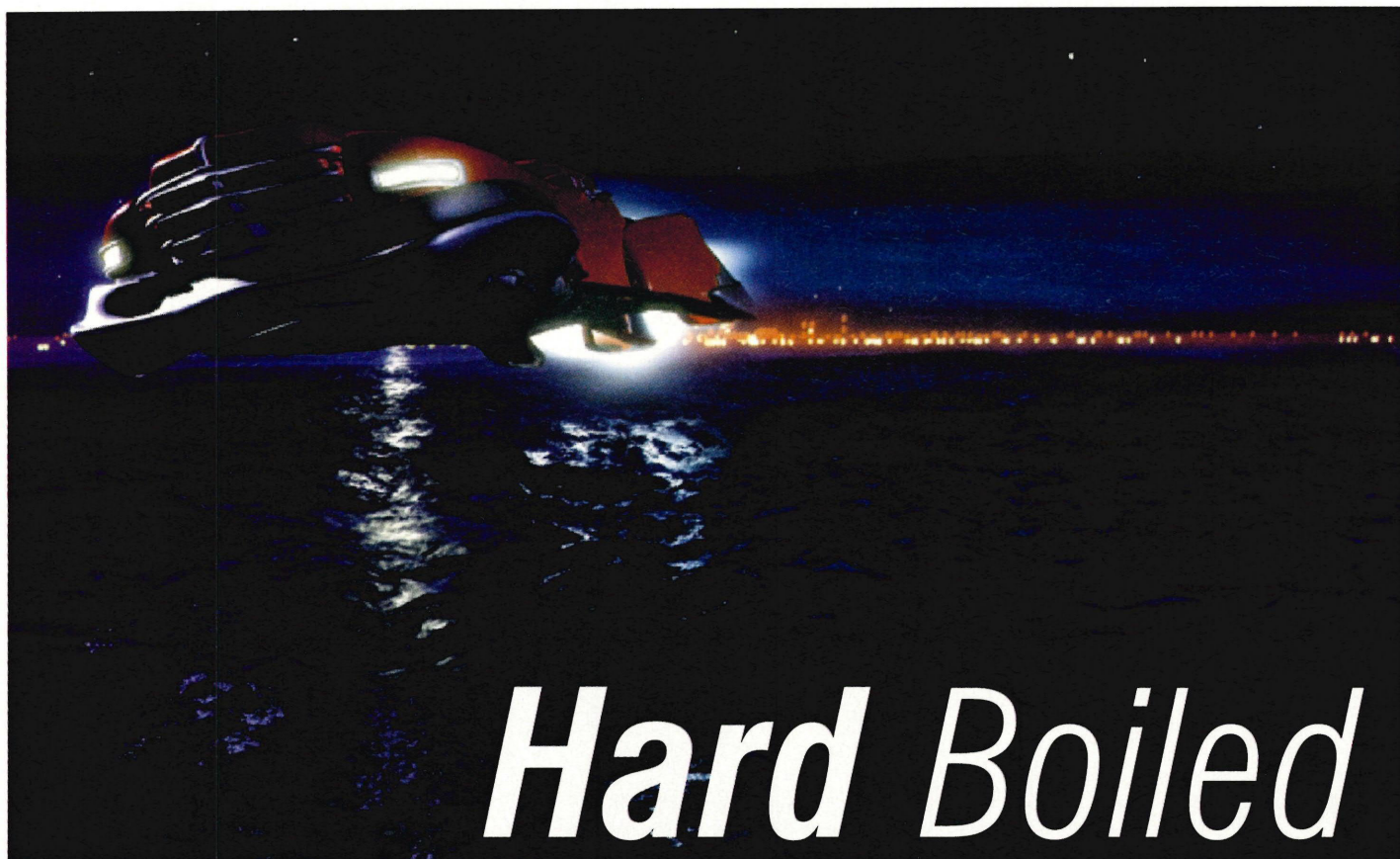
Which is not to say it's any slouch with the normal digi-pad. Oh no. It works fine so you needn't worry about hanging on for the chunky grey thing.



PSP RATING...

Graphics : 78
Animation : 82
Sound FX : 76
Music : 84
Lastability : 82
Playability : 88

85



Hard Boiled



ard Boiled.
Hmm, good name, very promising that.

It's based on a comic by Dark Knight Returns genius Frank Miller. Cool. And what's this? Kicking techno soundtrack, gorgeous FMV sequences... Er, crap game.

See, you can take Bella Emberg, dress her up in the best togs Chanel has to offer and get Nicky Clarke to do her hair, but at the end of the day she's still going to be Bella Emberg. Just as, at the end of the day, strip *Hard Boiled* of its sexy trimmings and it's still going to be a crap game. A real dog. Right up there with the *Batman Forever*s and *Crow: City of Angels* of this world, in fact. What's so wrong with it? Let's lift up its fancy frock and take a look, shall we?

Release : AUGUST

Company : EA

Price : £44.99

Players : 1

Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP

IT'S A COMIC!

Starting with the name, its origins are cultish, based, as it is, on a comic. Indeed it comes billed as Frank Miller and Geof Darrow's *Hard Boiled* just to give it that extra touch of cred. Believe me, it needs all the little touches of cred it can get.

Then there's the FMV which serves the double purpose of bringing the player up to speed on the storyline and duping him or her into believing they're about to play an exciting and original game. It witters on about about an android called Nixon who, for no apparent reason, decides to kill his boss, Charles Willeford. Needles to say, Willeford's not just the manager at the local Kwik Save. He's head of a huge corporation which basically rules the whole *Hard Boiled* world. This world, you see, is a Blade Runner-esque future (natch) where corporations and advertising rule.

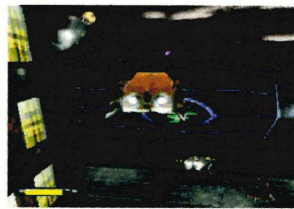
Much more than that you don't want to know. Suffice

to say the game concerns itself with Nixon's attempts to destroy Willeford.

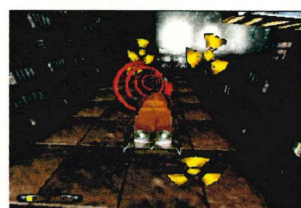
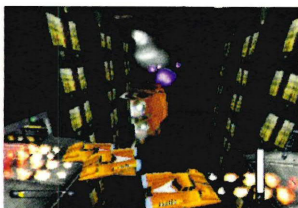
IT'S A FORD EASTWOOD!

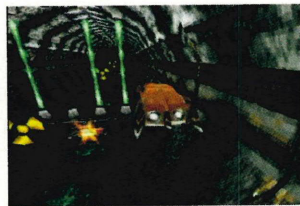
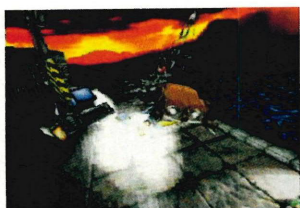
Ah, the game. In a word it's a space racer. Or an 'arcade-style 3D racing and shooting game' if you believe the press release. This means it has a *WipEout* feel as your futuris-

tic Ford Eastwood (for that is its name) glides through those Blade Runner-esque scenes. In actual fact though, the player doesn't race anything else and instead must occupy the time by using lasers and missiles to decimate oncoming enemies. In this sense it owes more to *Afterburner* than *WipEout* as the player has to avoid all



'LOOK MUM, IT'S HARD BOILED.'
'COME AWAY NOW, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MIGHT CATCH.'





THERE'S A BIT OF A TUNNEL B-1 FEEL IN SOME AREAS AS THE FORD EASTWOOD GLIDES INTO, ER, TUNNELS. DOESN'T REALLY HELP IMPROVE THE GAME, THOUGH.

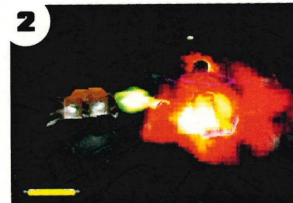
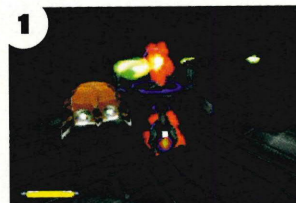
manner of on-screen baddies as well as exploding barrels, bits of lethal industrial equipment and so forth. Along the way are various power-ups to collect. These include yellow nuclear symbols which allow you to access an end of mission stage, missile pick-ups and bonuses for changing weapons and filling up the energy bar.

There's another power-up too, and that gives the Ford Eastwood an extra burst of speed. *Hard Boiled* feels so goddam slow this should be a good thing, but as with everything else in this game it's poo. Instead of giving the car a satisfying spurt it catapults it forward so fast the player has no control and thus barrels into the nearest building. You don't want to do that, so the boost bonus joins that elite videogame band of power-ups you actually avoid. Nice.

IT'S CRAP!

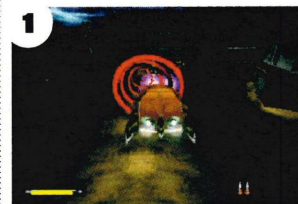
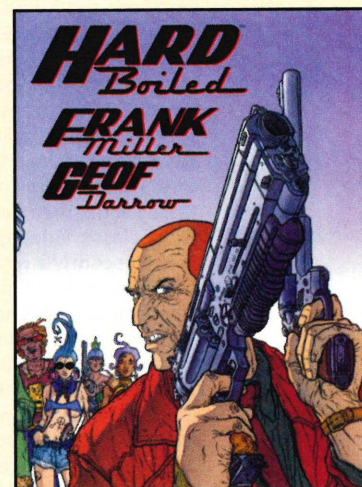
As you're (slowly) cruising along, the enemy does attack with increasing ferocity but it's difficult to care because while parts are a walk in the park, others are virtually impossible. Some of the alien craft explode immediately while others take an eternity

to die, by which time you've lost interest anyway. Blow up everything in your path and the game offers different routes and shortcuts to provide more enemies and power-ups. Should you be bothered to reach a boss the controls change from their normal linear set-up enabling you to rotate around the enemy. In normal mode the controls allow the craft to drift up and down, bank left and right. They take a bit of getting used to but once mastered do allow the player to explore each level in greater depth. Do you want to explore levels? Well, *Blade Runner*-esque it says on the press release, but only if you've watched your *Blade Runner* on a small black and white portable TV with poor reception. As a result, level detail is murky and uninteresting and backgrounds offer no interaction until the fourth stage. By which time... Ridley Scott should sue.



HARD BOILED: THE COMIC

A few years ago, the comics scene was rocked by an ultra-violent three-issue series called *Hard Boiled*. Written by industry star Frank Miller (responsible for *The Dark Knight Returns*; *Sin City*, a superbly gritty crime series, and the screenplay for *RoboCop 2*) and drawn in a hyper-detailed and gory style by Geof Darrow, it concerned Nixon, a cyborg assassin made to think he is a human tax collector. Through a series of events too strange and violent to mention, Nixon realises who he is and decides to go and have a chat with his boss... This is a stylish and good looking comic with great car chases and lots of groovy gunplay. Everything the game isn't, really.



HERE'S WHERE YOU CRASH AFTER PICKING UP THE BOOST BONUS. DON'T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE TWICE.



Opinion With all its cool trimmings, *Hard Boiled* could and should have been a great game. Hell, you'd settle for it being an OK game. As it is, it blows goats. From the start it fails to involve the player, offering nothing in the way of excitement as your craft potters along at about the speed of a Reliant Robin. Graphics are shoddy, the difficulty curve is all over the place and the enemy more annoying than threatening. Has it got anything going for it? The soundtrack and the FMV - that's it. What's even worse is that they don't even have flying cars in the comic. AH



PSP RATING...

Graphics : 35
Animation : 56
Sound FX : 64
Music : 89
Lastability : 32
Playability : 38

43

AS YET
UNSGINED IN
THIS COUNTRY,
JAPANESE
IMPORT TITLE
RUNABOUT IS
TO BE
RELEASED IN
THE STATES AS
FELONY
11-79.

Runabout

Usual day's work in the shopping centre on Saturday: Sold three pairs of shoes, went to lunch with Mandy... and got mown down by a lunatic driving a coach in the afternoon. The mad bugger smashed through several window displays, ran down an army of shoppers then sped off, with half a dozen patrol cars on his tail. Mayhem.

ANTI SOCIAL

Runabout isn't a game everybody will enjoy. Pillars of the community, responsible mums and dads, teachers and school governors probably won't see the funny side. After all, racing recklessly through busy streets, de-railing subway trains, going through police traps at max speed - what will people say? We at PlayStation Plus do not care. Unruly behaviour such as this is the bread and butter of classic video games.

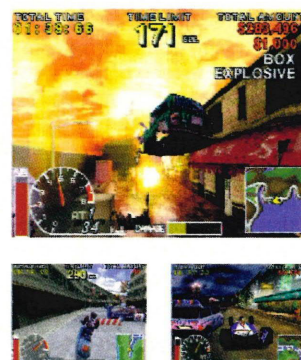
Just recently a whole bunch of semi-serious PlayStation racers have appeared, boasting glossy graphics and high speed thrills. However, nothing much has been added to the racing genre. *Runabout* may not benefit from drop-dead gorgeous looks or come from well-known origins, but it forces fun back into gaming, leaving players howling with laughter or screaming psychotically. Let's lock granny and the cats safely indoors and go for a spin.

VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

When *Runabout* first loads things may seem a tad dull, but this is a venture into the unknown, where the more



Release : OUT NOW
Company : CLIMAX
Price : Import
Players : 1
Genre : RACING

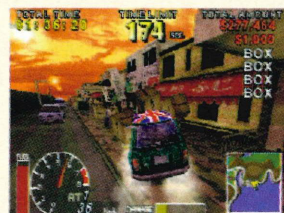


you mess around the more options open up. Just four vehicles are on offer to begin with: A four-wheel drive pick-up truck; BMW 320; Mini Cooper and a Vespa. The truck is robust, the BMW fast, the Mini manoeuvrable and the Vespa plain silly. Despite very different driving styles, four ain't much of a collection. But don't fret just yet because *Runabout* has an outrageous number of hidden cars - 18 to be precise.

There's also only three courses, but rather than being simple single-route affairs, whole areas have been mapped out and it's up to you to choose which turnings to take. Down Town kicks off in a network of narrow shopping streets, takes in the grounds of a mansion then moves out into cliff roads and sleepy suburbs. Seaside follows a motorway,

SMASH IT UP

All manner of road side objects and vehicles can be smashed up in *Runabout*. Signs and barriers, police cars, stalls, bicycles, tankers, vending machines, beach huts - all are just asking to be wrecked because destruction equals cash. Folding stuff not only gets you onto a score table, it's also one of the ways to access hidden vehicles. Watch out though, *Runabout* cars only take a certain amount of damage, bellowing huge clouds of black smoke before bursting into flames.



A LOT OF CARS

Every step of the way *Runabout* aims to stand out from the crowd. Take the selection of vehicles for instance. What other title includes a bus, truck, road sweeper, tank, remote controlled car, police vehicle, formula one racer and limo to mess around with? Much time has obviously been spent looking at vehicle characteristics as handling seems spot on. With the lorry dipping the airbrakes make turning easier, the bus has a high view and turns in smooth long arcs, the remote controlled car has no gears, is twitchy and gets flung all over the shop.



JUMP BEHIND THE WHEEL OF ALL MANNER OF VEHICLES THEN RECKLESSLY TAKE TO BUSY STREETS. RUNABOUT IS A GAME FOR MANIACS AND PSYCHOPATHS, SO IT SHOULD SELL WELL.

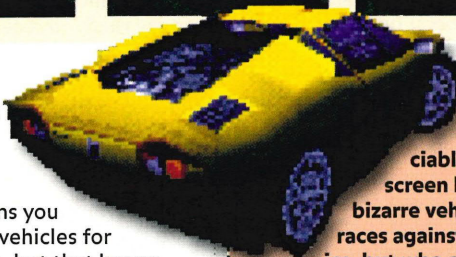
moves onto a sandy beach, hops across a bridge jump and can finish in sewers. Metro City covers cafe society streets, moves on through a honeycomb of tight, bumpy roads and ends in devastating style in a shopping mall. Steering, suspension, tyre and engine settings can be tampered with and a test track, with long straights, hard corners and lines of bollards allowing players to see the full effects of messin' with the motas.

NO CONTEST

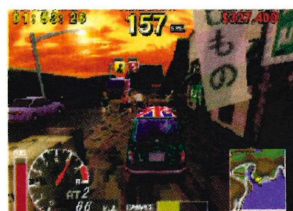
Oddly enough there are no other competitors to race against, just an M25-load of Sunday drivers to avoid or wreck. Rather than clocking up laps the idea is to get from A to B before time runs out, completing a few simple missions along the way. This means either grabbing items

or tracking down other vehicles. Finishing tasks earns you two new vehicles for each area, but that leaves another 12 available. Unfortunately for you, the instruction booklet says absolutely nothing about how to get them...

Graphics are interesting and varied but also rough. When the screen fills up the game slows down, detection of collision can often be vague and it's very very difficult to work out how to get all the cars. Despite these faults *Runabout* is fabulous: Pacey, painfully funny and very moreish, racing tends to involve plenty of gritting of teeth. Only those that are seriously boring will fail to enjoy this romp.



Opinion Games like this are few and far between. *Runabout* is based on unhealthy and unsociable ideas which makes it a winner before the title screen loads. Instantly fun and absorbing, finding new, bizarre vehicles means you can't help coming back for more races against the clock. There are a few niggles, like rough graphics, but who cares when it's possible to ram a tank through a shopping centre. Get it and run amok. JM

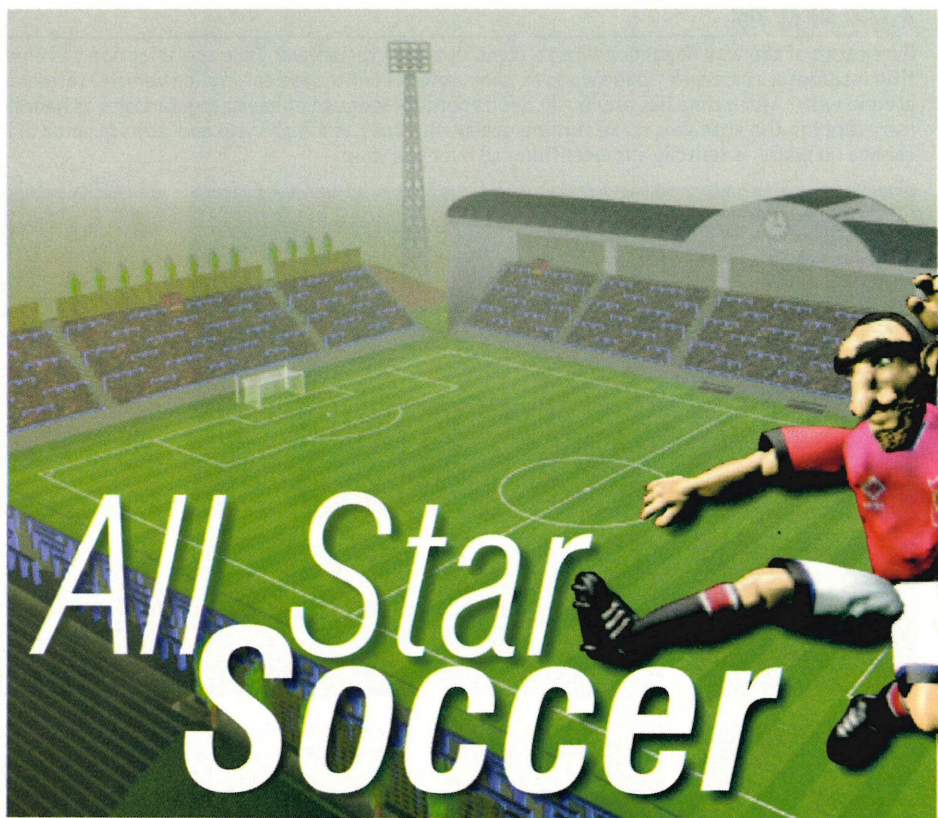


PSP RATING...

Graphics : 87
Animation : 84
Sound FX : 80
Music : 82
Lastability : 86
Playability : 94

90

THE MOVES HAVE BEEN KEPT SIMPLE AND WITHIN THREE MAIN BUTTONS. YET, CONVERSELY, PASSING IS IMPRECISE AND TAKING A SHOT IS LESS THAN ACCURATE.



Humour and football go together about as well as custard and pork chops. Witness the dozens of arse 'Football Gaffes' videos cluttering up the bargain bins at WH Smiths. Nick Hancock is quite a funny guy, but leave him to provide quips between dozens of footballers having fights or falling over, and the mightiest of comedy Gods would fail to raise a smile.

With this in mind, can it be possible to combine gags galore in a PlayStation football game? Eidos thinks so. We don't, and *All Star Soccer* proves us right. What's worse is that the game itself is as lame as the repetitive humour on offer.

All Star Soccer's humour takes the form of sprites based on the game's larger than life stars and the in-game commentary which spoofs everyone from Eric Cantona's poetic meanderings to John Motson's endless trivia. It also features completely OTT violence with a range of bone-crunching tackles and off-the-ball fouls which can be switched off if required.

Release : AUGUST
Company : EIDOS
Price : £44.95
Players : 1-4
Genre : SPORTS SIM

STAR AS YOU MEAN TO GO ON

The humour starts with a digitised intro depicting Des Lynam waking up late and thrashing his way across the globe to present Match of the Day, Des is then used to explain the options preceding the matches. These include everything from match length and the aforementioned violence meter though to the selection of teams and tournaments. *All Star Soccer* bears little relation to real football and as such the teams on offer are totally fictitious. The players within them, however, bear more than a passing resemblance to certain footballing greats - and not-so-greats. Ruud Gullit and his dreads are obvious fodder, as is Jason Lee and his old 'pineapple head' haircut - although Eidos missed out on a huge opportunity as the Lee look-alike is one of *All Star's* more prolific scorers. Still, we did say it had very little bearing on the real thing.

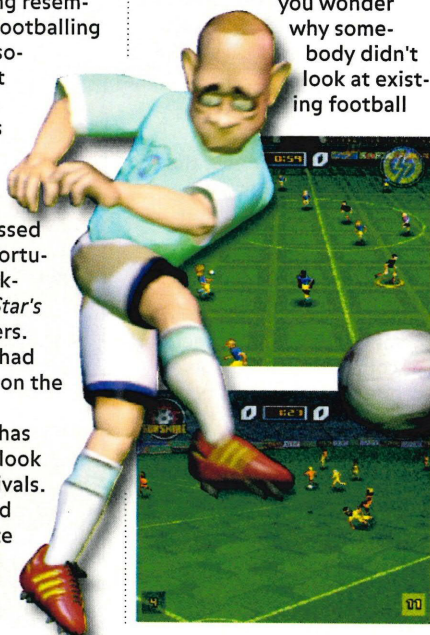
The game itself has more of a cartoon look than its plentiful rivals. Rather than retread the polygonal route of *Soccer '97* and *ISS Pro*, Eidos has used sprites which

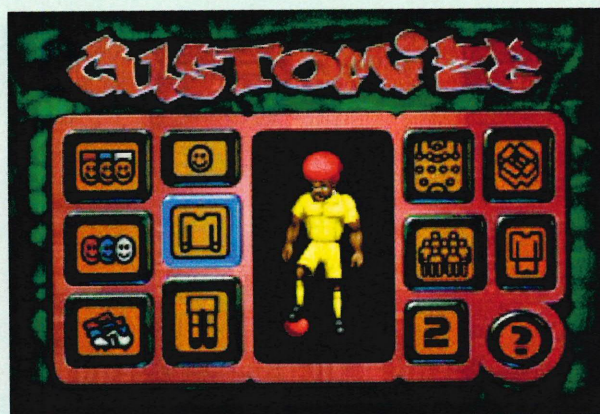
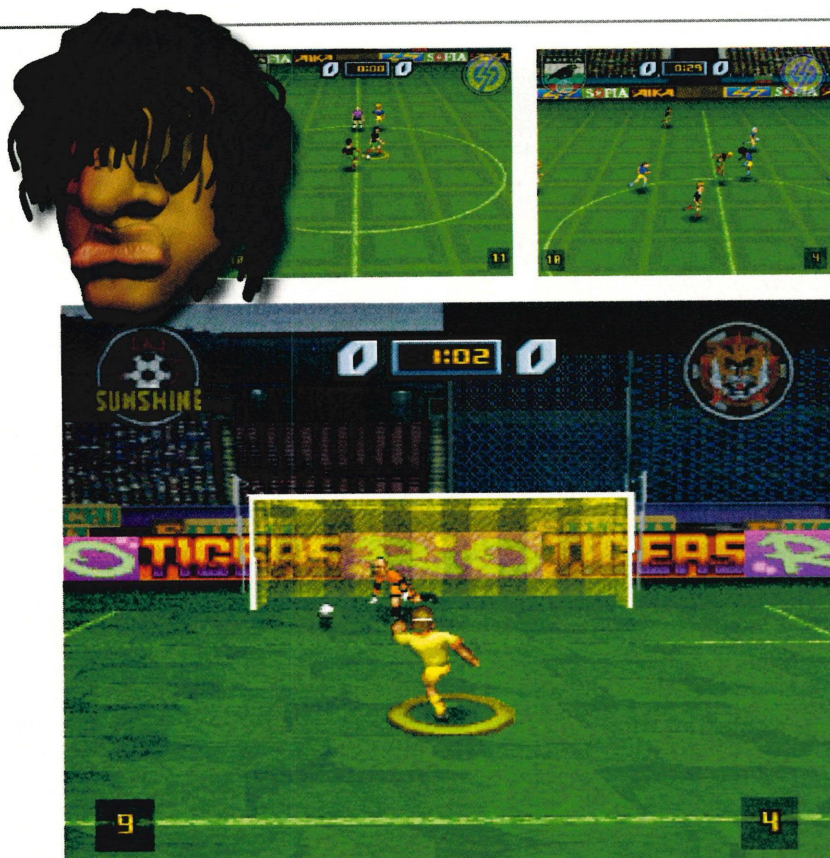
are easier to add detail to than polygons. Sadly, sprites can make a game look a tad dated, and this is most certainly the case in *All Star*. If anything, *All Star* resembles an old Atari ST game endorsed by Peter Beardsley, and the small sprites stumble around badly let down by a lack of animation frames. An example of this is when effecting a diving header. As the ball floats in, there seems to be no movement from the sprite ready to receive it, and then all of a sudden they're in the air - no mid-move animation at all. This is extremely shoddy indeed, and makes you wonder why somebody didn't look at existing football

games and notice theirs was nowhere near as smooth. It certainly can't be because they were concentrating on the gameplay.

A PASSING GAME

Everything in *All Star Soccer* has been boiled down to the very basics. There are two shot buttons for high and low efforts, and passing is effected using the circle button. There are also sprint and tackle buttons, while the violent and nifty trick moves are accessed using the shoulder buttons. Simple stuff indeed, and if it wasn't for a number of very basic gameplay flaws the system would be more than adequate. However, as play progresses, passes are often wildly inaccurate or intercepted, while the same

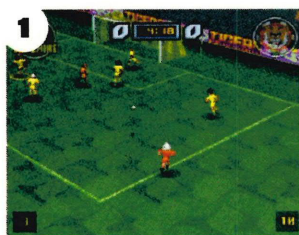




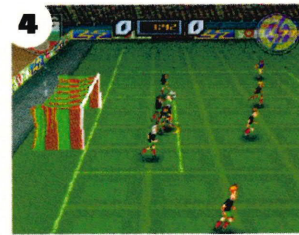
WE CAN REBUILD HIM

One of the stronger sections of *All Star* is the player creation screen. This allows the player to create the player of their dreams - something even Manchester United boss Alex Ferguson can only dream of. Every aspect of the player can be altered, from the size of their physique down to the colour of their skin and hairstyle.

If a player is of muscular build, they are slower when running and thus of better use in defence. However, the slighter wingers are then more prone to injuries because of their relatively puny physique. With eleven genetically-enhanced players created, the player can then insert them into the kit of their choice and enter their own team in *All Star*'s league or cup options.



(1-4) THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE A LOT OF SKILL INVOLVED IN SCORING. SHOOTING AND BENDING THE BALL AROUND THE GOALIE IS THE SIMPLEST METHOD, BUT LOBBING A CROSS IN AND MEETING IT WITH A HEADER IS MORE SATISFYING. SLIGHTLY.



handful of shots invariably leave the goalie standing. Add to this a number of CPU teams who pull off miracle shots from which there is seemingly no way to defend and you have a very frustrating game indeed. The list of crimes against soccer games in *All Star* is as endless as the stream of poor quality gags. Sluggish controls, slow reactions when switching control between players and limited accuracy. You name an iffy

soccer game trait, and *All Star* suffers from it. And this is where the humour really starts to grate.

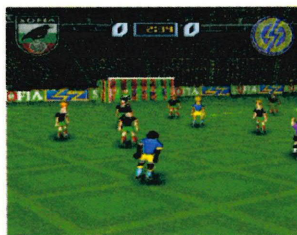
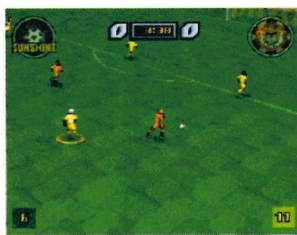
WHAT IT IS TO LAUGH

You know when you're in a bad mood, and someone insists on trying to make you laugh with crap jokes? That's what playing *All Star Soccer* can be like. When you're struggling to master the sticky controls, the last thing

you need is the same eight or nine jokes in a loop. At first, the novelty of the commentary is cool. The voice artist has got his victims down to a tee, with Eric Cantona spouting varieties of Fish and Trawler talk, while Andy Gray, Alan Green and 'Big' Ron Atkinson are similarly lampooned. As soon as you've heard what's on offer once or twice though, they start to grate and after a while the 'Speech Off' option is bound

to come into play.

All Star Soccer is a very dated and frustrating game, built on a very dodgy premise. Football and humour rarely mix, and if you are going to attempt it on the PlayStation at least ensure the actual game is a step up from the likes of *ISS Pro*. As it stands, *All Star* fails on all counts, and the only people who will be laughing if this sells will be Eidos. All the way to the bank.

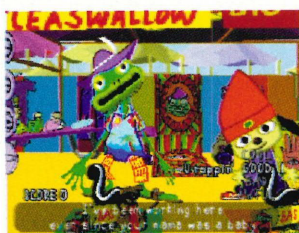
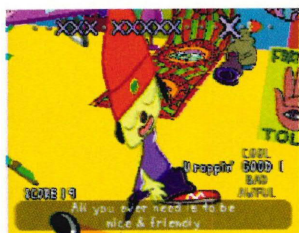


Opinion Humour and football. it never works. Every football cliché has been trotted out in *All Star Soccer*. If the game itself was worthy of note, the humour could be forgiven but we are talking dated here. The sprites are poorly animated and sluggish to control, and the speed of the game is far too slow and kills any chance of flowing play. Eidos really takes its eye off the ball with *All Star Soccer*, and what probably started as a jokey idea comes across as very unfunny indeed. SM

PSP RATING...

Graphics : 54
Animation : 42
Sound FX : 71
Music : 57
Lastability : 31
Playability : 38

34



PaRappa The Rapper

boundary-smashing titles are few and far between on most platforms, PlayStation included. If a company does manage to come up with something completely out of the ordinary these products often fail to deliver strong gameplay but nonetheless deserve praise just for the effort. *PaRappa The Rapper* is one of a kind. When first presented with this game most have no idea what to make of it, but within half an hour they're refusing to let someone else have a go.

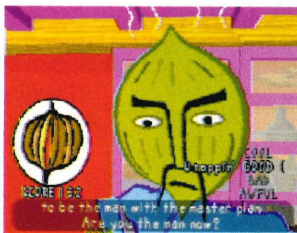
Players take on the role of PaRappa, a young homeboy, complete with trainers, who aims to become the top rapper in his neighbourhood in order to win the heart of a girl with a flower for a face.

To complete the quest it's necessary to work through a number of levels - each with its own musical style - starting with some Kung-Foo scratch Hip Hop with Chop Chop Master Onion Head!

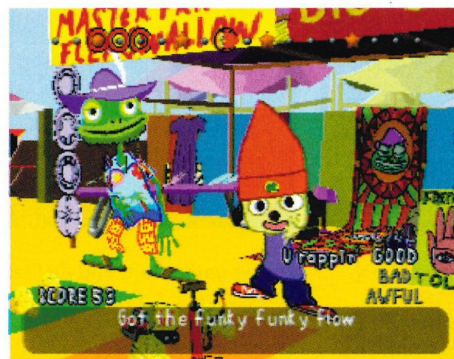
Gameplay is essentially based on the old electronic Simon Says toy. A character raps out rhymes and it's

PaRappa's job to follow along word for word and in time with beats. A pointer along the top of the screen - which operates in time with music - highlights which keys must be pressed. As the hip hop hero's quest progresses, so timings become more frantic and longer lines of rhyme need to be followed.

One of the things that makes this game unique are the graphics. Although set in a 3D polygon world, characters, which are all typically loony Japanese creations, are flat as pancakes. As cameras pan around scenes heroes flop and ripple to the music. Perform badly and sections of the scenery fall apart, perform amazingly and the worlds bust apart to allow PaRappa to go free stylee.



PaRappa's NO ICE-T TO BEGIN WITH, BUT UNDER YOUR GUIDANCE HE COULD SOON BE DISSING HOMEBOYS WITH THE BEST OF THEM.



Opinion There is only one PaRappa. For some time it looked as if Sony wouldn't release this baby, but thank Christ they did. Never before has a game like this come to our shores. The idea of it sounds pretty dull and pointless but once you start tapping out combinations of different buttons to rhythms, you don't want to stop. A classic moment in video game history. **JM**

PSP
RATING **90**
Animation : 89
Sound FX : 93
Music : 95
Lastability : 80
Playability : 93

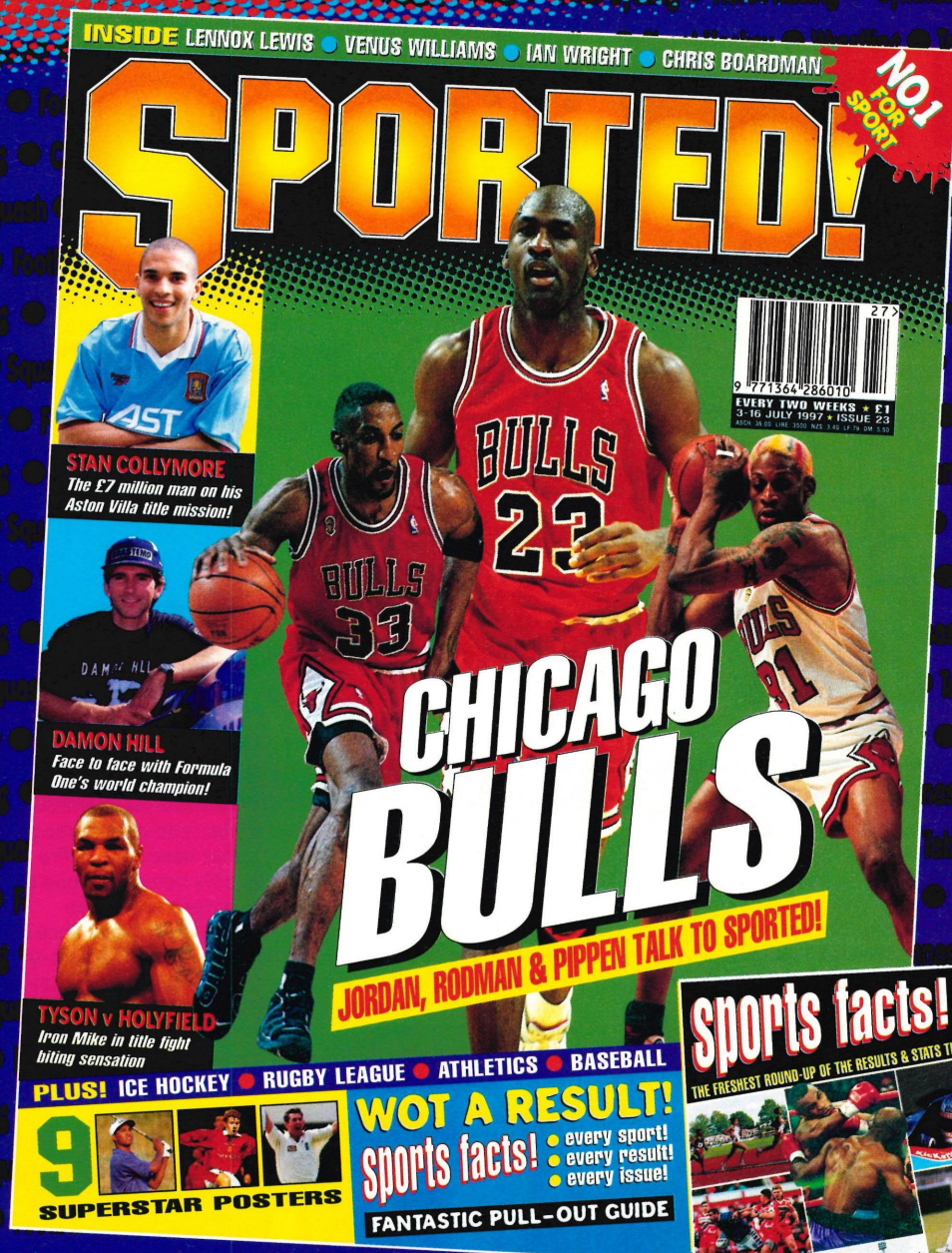
89

THE GEEZER IN THE BAGGY TROUSERS AND HAT? THAT'S PARAPPA. THE FLOWER-FACED GIRL IS THE ONE HE WANTS TO IMPRESS WITH HIS SUPERB HIP HOP RHYMING SKILLS. WHO CAN BLAME HIM, EH GUYS?

Release : SEPTEMBER
Company : SONY
Price : £34.99
Players : 1
Genre : THERE ISN'T ONE

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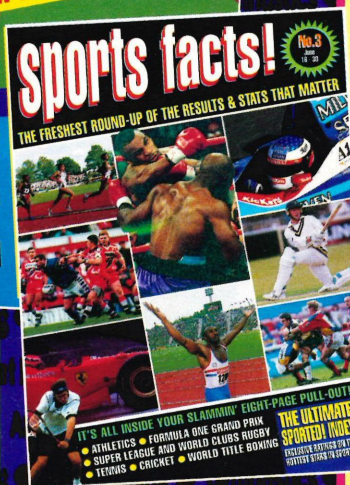
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ALIEN TRILOGY

When *Alien Trilogy* first came out we liked it. We liked its eerie atmospherics and its mix of *Doom*-style action mixed with problem solving. OK, we said, so the 3D aliens do look a bit cack up close but hey, there's masses of them to shoot, and after all who's admiring the scenery when you've got a faceful of angry alien? With tons of levels, barrels of game-play and cool FMV linking scenes, *Alien Trilogy* is the nearest you're going to get to the action and intensity of the films in your front room.



What we said then : THIS IS, WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE BEST USE OF A FILM LICENCE YET.

What we say now : WE'VE HAD *DIE HARD TRILOGY* SINCE, OF COURSE BUT THIS IS STILL A FIRST CLASS SHOOT 'EM UP.

Scored: (THEN) 93% (NOW) 91%
Company : ACCLAIM
Players : 1
Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP

WORMS

For some strange reason the word addiction has a rather negative meaning in all but the videogame world. Here in the games arena, saying a game is addictive is to bestow it the highest honour. And *Worms* is addictive. Basically a comical strategy number, it involves guiding teams of slithering hermaphrodites across the game area while other worm armies do their damndest to stop you. Slightly so-so in one-player mode it really comes into its own with the addition of mates and (preferably) lager.



What we said then : I THINK YOU'LL HEAR *WORMS* SCREAMING IN THIS OFFICE FOR A VERY LONG TIME.

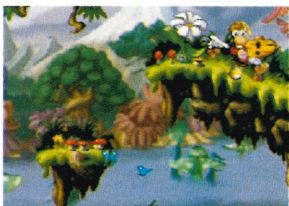
What we say now : *WORMS* IS AN ESSENTIAL PLATINUM BUY FOR THOSE WHO MISSED IT FIRST TIME OUT.

Scored: (THEN) 92% (NOW) 89%
Company : OCEAN
Players : 1-4
Genre : STRATEGY

Yours for under a Pony...

RAYMAN

Such is the low standing of *Rayman* in these parts it actually found its way into our 15 worst games list. In short, it's about as welcome here as a dose of the clap. Its good points? Well, if cutesy-pie graphics don't have your fingers reaching throatwards then they might be considered a plus, and there's no denying *Rayman* does look nice. However, it's one of those titles that looks good in screenshots because playing it reveals problems galore. Little things like no gameplay or originality. And yes, the graphics may be nice, but they're sickly with it. Look at them for too long and you're gonna want to take up serial killing as a career.



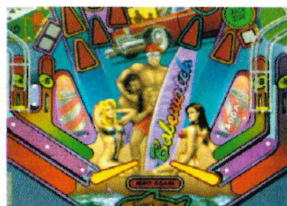
What we said then : A RIGHT PIECE OF OLD POO

What we say now : TIME TO RE-EVALUATE *RAYMAN* IN LIGHT OF ITS PLATINUM RELEASE AND GIVE IT A FAIR CRACK OF THE WHIP. HOW HAVE THE YEARS TREATED IT? OH, ITS STILL A RIGHT PIECE OF OLD POO.

Scored: (THEN) 59% (NOW) 50%
Company : UBI SOFT
Players : 1-2
Genre : PLATFORM

TRUE PINBALL

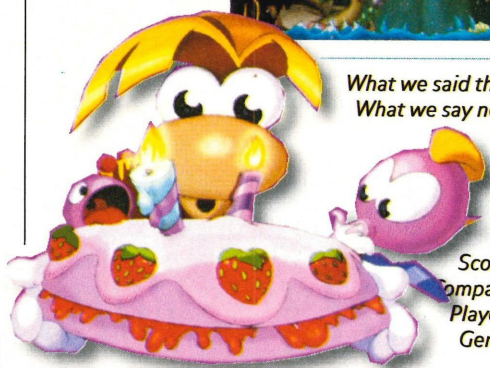
On the one hand there's *Extreme Pinball* and it's a scabby, sweaty hand at that. Then on the other hand there's *Pro Pinball: The Web* and this hand probably belongs to one of the Minogue sisters. Somewhere between these two extremes of good and bad comes *True Pinball*. And since it's now available at a knock-down price that makes it a bargain in anyone's book. True, even with a choice of views it can be difficult to see the whole of the play area at any one time, but four tables, each with a different theme, a fairly realistic ball movement, lots of quirky bits and oodles of fun make this a safe purchase at £19.99.



What we said then : AS A 'REAL' PINBALL FANATIC, I'M EASILY AMUSED AND CAN PLAY THIS FOR HOURS.

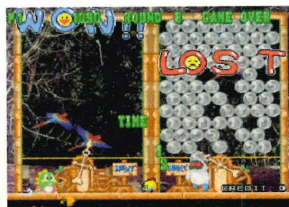
What we say now : SINCE SURPASSED BY *PRO PINBALL: THE WEB* IN THE SHINY BALL-KNOCKING STAKES, THIS IS STILL A FINE SIMULATION.

Scored: (THEN) 92% (NOW) 75%
Company : OCEAN
Players : 1
Genre : PINBALL



BUST-A-MOVE 2

Like any good puzzle game, *Bust A Move 2* makes simplicity its prime virtue. Out go fancy graphics and ear-grabbing sounds and in comes pure gameplay. The sort of gameplay that has you playing well past your bedtime and even then your dreams are filled with coloured bubbles. *Bust A Move 2* is such a game. Hugely addictive and mucho fun to play, buy this and *Worms* and you'll probably never leave the house again.



What we said then : IF YOU CAN OVERCOME THE IDEA OF PAYING £40 FOR A SIMPLE IDEA, BUY IT NOW.

What we say now : PAYING £20 SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM THEN, SHOULD IT? GO GET IT NOW, BOYO.

Scored: (THEN) 92% (NOW) 92%

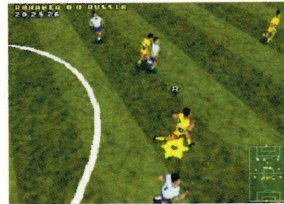
Company : ACCLAIM

Players : 1-2

Genre : PUZZLE

ACTUA SOCCER

With *Fifa '96* already available on Platinum, along comes *Actua Soccer* to challenge its £20 crown. At the time the Actua contribution was hailed the PlayStation's best kickaround: User-friendly, frothed our review; fast, instinctive and with realistic passing and shooting. Its one drawback was that camera views had a habit of changing at the worst moments. Otherwise a two-nil away win with a players' fight, a dog on the pitch, hot meat pie at half-time and a cup of Bovril waiting at home.



What we said then : ACTUA SOCCER IS THE SOCCER GAME YOUR PLAYSTATION HAS BEEN WAITING FOR.

What we say now : ACTUA SOCCER IS THE SOCCER GAME THE PLATINUM RANGE HAS BEEN WAITING FOR.

Scored: (THEN) 92% (NOW) 79%

Company : GREMLIN

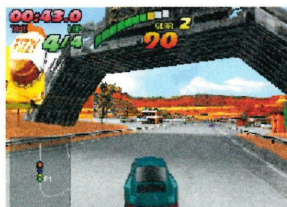
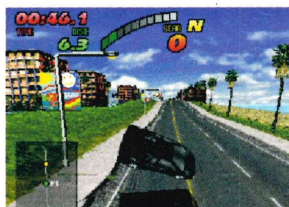
Players : 1-2

Genre : FOOTBALL

Oasis aren't the only ones to get platinum discs. So do PlayStation owners. And we don't get all the hassle of having to marry Patsy Kensit into the bargain. The good news is that there's now even more **£20 games** in your local videogame fleamarket and more on the way. **So here at PlayStation Plus we decided to take stock of the new releases.**

THE NEED FOR SPEED

Not exactly starved of driving games on the PlayStation, *The Need for Speed* doesn't cut it as a full-price purchase. As a £20 buy? Well, you can race a selection of cars in different modes and it has a pretty good two-player mode, but the one-player option can be frustrating since the CPU cars seem to possess super powers the player doesn't. What's more, whoever called it *The Need for Speed* obviously had tongue planted firmly in cheek because speedy it most certainly ain't. Its newly acquired Platinum status might soften the blow and it does have some interesting quirks but... *Ridge Racer*. Need we say more?



What we said then : I WONDERED WHAT EXACTLY *THE NEED FOR SPEED* COULD OFFER THAT OTHERS DON'T. ANSWER - NOTHING OF INTRINSIC VALUE.

What we say now : NOT BAD, JUST NOT THAT GOOD EITHER. STRANGELY ITS SEQUEL WAS PROBABLY WORSE.

Scored: (THEN) 70% (NOW) 68%

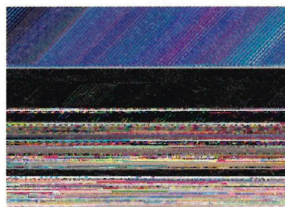
Company : EA

Players : 1-2 (plus link)

Genre : DRIVING

LOADED

Opinion tends to be divided on *Loaded*, with its detractors complaining about lack of depth and variety. Its fans, however, will point out its off-the-wall characters, inspired graphics and fast and furious action. Whatever, if it's a mindless shoot 'em up you're after then *Loaded*'s your man. The player has to break out of a futuristic prison and destroy everything in the way and - well, that's it really.



What we said then : ANYONE WHO LOVES IT FAST AND FURIOUS WILL NO DOUBT GET A KICK OUT OF *LOADED*, BUT ULTIMATELY IT LACKS THE DEPTH TO MAKE IT A TRULY IMPRESSIVE TITLE.

What we say now : WHAT WE SAID THEN PRETTY MUCH SUMS IT UP.

Scored: (THEN) 77% (NOW) 65%

Company : GREMLIN

Players : 1-2

Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP



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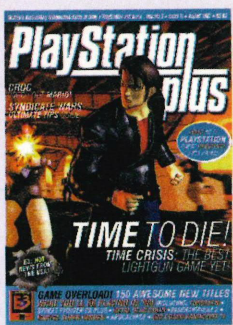
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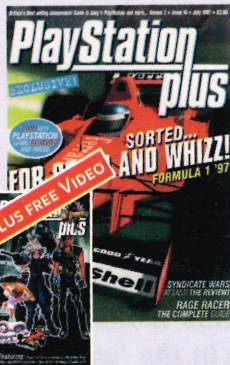


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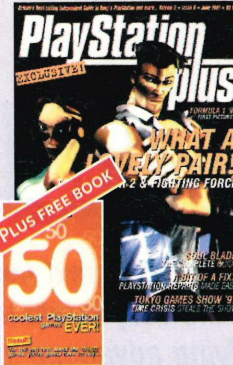
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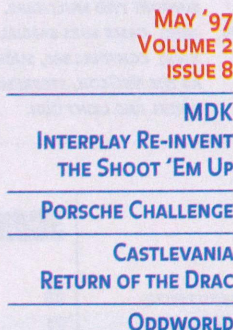
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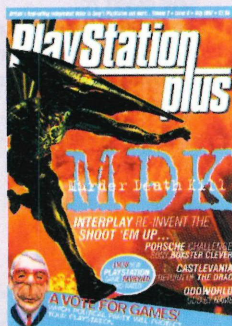
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Review Index


The next five pages have been compiled using the very latest in comprehensive guide technology.


By applying advanced scientific techniques to the 'words' we are not only able to bring you a guide with the very latest game information, but supplement it with our expert opinion, vacuum-sealed into a one-line format. God we're good.


KEY TO ICONS


 THIS ICON SHOWS THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS THAT CAN COMPETE AT THE SAME TIME.

 THIS ICON INDICATES WHETHER THE TITLE USES A MEMORY CARD TO SAVE GAMES TO.

 DOES THE GAME HAVE A TWO-PLAYER LINK-UP OPTION? IT WILL IF THIS ICON IS TICKED.

 SOME STRATEGY GAMES AND SHOOT 'EM UPS SUPPORT THE MOUSE.

 THIS WILL SHOW IF A GAME IS MULTITAP COMPATIBLE. SOME CAN SUPPORT TWO MULTITAPS.

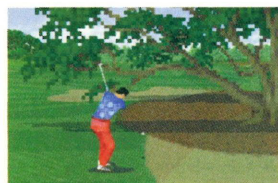
 GAME USES SPECIAL CONTROLLERS, SUCH AS THE N64CON, STEERING WHEEL AND LIGHT GUN.

| NAME | PRICE | COMPANY |  |  |  |  |  |  | COMMENT | SCORE |
|----------------------------|--------|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|-------|
| 2XTREME | £44.99 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | POOR SEQUEL TO EXTREME GAMES WHICH OFFERS FEW IMPROVEMENTS. | 55 |
| 3D LEMMINGS | £44.99 | PSYGNOSIS | 1 | ✓ | | ✓ | | | SMART 3D GRAPHICS BUT UNINTERESTING AND AWKWARD GAMEPLAY. | 81 |
| ACTUA GOLF | £44.99 | GREMLIN | 1-4 | ✓ | | | | | CYBER GOLF AT ITS MOST REALISTIC. THE BEST GOLF GAME ON THE PLAYSTATION. | 88 |
| ACTUA GOLF 2 | £44.95 | GREMLIN | 1-4 | ✓ | | | | | THE BEST GOLF GAME ON THE PLAYSTATION. | 83 |
| ACTUA SOCCER | £44.99 | GREMLIN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | SLICK 3D GRAPHICS ARE ECLIPSED BY FLAWED GAMEPLAY. NICE, BUT DATED. | 82 |
| ACTUA SOCCER: CLUB EDITION | £44.99 | GREMLIN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | THE SAME ACTUA SOCCER WITH THE PREMIER TEAMS. TOO LITTLE TOO LATE. | 60 |
| ADIDAS POWER SOCCER | £44.99 | PSYGNOSIS | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ANOTHER FOOTBALL GAME WHICH FAVOURS COOL GRAPHICS OVER GAMEPLAY. | 93 |
| ADIDAS SOCCER INT' '97 | £44.95 | PSYGNOSIS | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | | DECIDEDLY AVERAGE FOLLOW UP TO ADIDAS POWER SOCCER. | 70 |
| AGENT ARMSTRONG | £44.95 | VIRGIN | 1 | ✓ | | | | | PLAYABLE 3D SHOOTING PLATFORMER WHICH SUFFERS FROM A FEW FAULTS. | 75 |
| AGILE WARRIOR | £39.99 | VIRGIN | 1 | ✓ | | | | | CHALLENGING BUT NEAT ARCADE-STYLE AIRCRAFT-BASED SHOOT 'EM UP | 85 |
| AIR COMBAT | £39.99 | NAMCO | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | TEDIOUS, LACKING DEPTH AND VARIETY EVEN IN TWO-PLAYER MODE. | 80 |
| AIV EVOLUTION GLOBAL | £44.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | ✓ | | | ENJOYABLE IF SOMEWHAT OVERWHELMING RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SIM. | 86 |
| ALIEN TRILOGY | £44.95 | ACCLAIM | 1 | ✓ | | | | | AN EXCELLENT DOOM CLONE WHICH CAPTURES ALL THE SCARES OF THE FILMS | 83 |
| ALONE IN THE DARK | £39.99 | INFOGRAMES | 1 | ✓ | | | | | INTERESTING PUZZLES FAIL TO MAKE UP FOR THE GAME'S DATED PRESENTATION. | 82 |
| ANDRETTI RACING | £44.99 | EA | 1-4 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | A LIGHTWEIGHT ALTERNATIVE TO THE FANTASTIC FORMULA 1. | 85 |
| AQUANAUT'S HOLIDAY | £39.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | | | | ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY UNDERWATER ADVENTURE THAT IS FRANKLY DULL. | 53 |
| AREA 51 | £44.99 | GT | 1-2 | | | ✓ | | LIGHT GUN | A BLAND SHOOT 'EM UP BASED ON A BLAND ARCADE GAME. | 52 |
| ASSAULT RIGS | £44.99 | PSYGNOSIS | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | A NICE IDEA WHICH IS TOO SIMPLE AND EASY FOR ITS OWN GOOD. | 81 |
| ATARI COLLECTION | £44.95 | GT | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | RETRO-GAMING COMPILATION WITH DUBIOUS APPEAL. | 75 |
| AYRTON SENNA'S KART DUEL | £44.99 | PHILIPS | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | SUBSTANDARD RACING ACTION FROM PHILIPS. AVOID AT ALL COSTS. | 32 |
| BALLBLAZER CHAMPIONS | £44.99 | ACTIVISION | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | FAST FURIOUS AND FUN FUTURE FOOTBALL GAME PLAYED WITH SPACESHIPS. | 87 |
| BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 2 | £49.99 | TAKARA | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | VISUALLY SUPERB BUT LACKING ANY REAL MEATY SUBSTANCE. | 71 |
| BATTLE STATIONS | £44.95 | EA | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | ORIGINAL BUT BADLY EXECUTED NAVAL WARFARE GAME. | 52 |
| BATMAN FOREVER | £44.99 | ACCLAIM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | BEAT 'EM UP BOREDOM IN THE EXTREME. EVEN IF YOU'RE A BATFAN, BEWARE. | 28 |
| BEDLAM | £44.99 | GT | 1 | ✓ | | ✓ | | | A MOUSE PROVES INVALUABLE FOR THIS FRANTIC TACTICAL BLASTER. | 87 |
| BIG HURT BASEBALL | £44.99 | ACCLAIM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | A PRETTY GOOD ADAPTATION OF A FAR FROM THRILLING SPORT. | 81 |
| BLACK DAWN | £44.99 | VIRGIN | 1 | ✓ | | | | | THE EQUALLY GOOD SEQUEL TO THE EXPLOSIVE AGILE WARRIOR. | 86 |
| BLAST CHAMBER | £44.99 | ACTIVISION | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ANYONE FOR A GAME OF FUTURISTIC TAG? I THOUGHT NOT. | 54 |
| BLAM! MACHINEHEAD | £44.99 | CORE DESIGN | 1 | ✓ | | | | | INITIALLY CONFUSING BUT ULTIMATELY CRIPPING 3D BLASTER. | 89 |
| BLAZING DRAGONS | £44.99 | BMG | 1 | ✓ | | | | | GOOD HUMOURED IF SOMETIMES LABORIOUS GRAPHIC ADVENTURE. | 87 |
| BREAK POINT | £44.99 | OCEAN | 1-4 | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | A PLEASANT ENOUGH TENNIS GAME, ALTHOUGH THE MOVES AREN'T INTUITIVE | 73 |
| BROKEN SWORD | £44.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | ✓ | | | SUPERB POINT AND CLICK ADVENTURE, WITH A STRONG STORY AND ATMOSPHERE. | 90 |
| BURNING ROAD | £44.99 | FUNSOFT | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | THE PLAYSTATION EQUIVALENT OF DAYTONA USA. GOOD GAMEPLAY AND LOOKS. | 88 |
| BUBBLE BOBBLE 2 | £34.99 | VIRGIN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | REASONABLE CONVERSION OF CUTSIE RETRO PLATFORM GAME. | 74 |
| BUBBLE BOBBLE PACK | £44.95 | ACCLAIM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | ONE OF THE BEST RETRO COLLECTIONS TO DATE, OFFERING TWO GAMES IN ONE. | 84 |
| BUST-A-MOVE 2 | £29.99 | ACCLAIM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | ONE OF THE CUTEST, MOST INCREDIBLY ADDICTIVE PUZZLE GAMES OF ALL TIME. | 92 |
| CARNAGE HEART | £34.99 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | BUILD ROBOTS, THEN TURN THEM LOOSE TO FIGHT IN THIS STRATEGY GAME. | 74 |
| CASPER | £44.95 | INTERPLAY | 1 | ✓ | | | | | AIMED AT THE YOUNGER PLAYER. NICE GRAPHICS BUT VERY AVERAGE. | 62 |
| CHEESY THE MOUSE | £44.95 | OCEAN | 1 | ✓ | | | | | THE AWFUL MAIN SPRITE HIDES SOME GREAT PLATFORM ACTION. | 82 |
| CHESSMASTER 3D | £44.95 | EA | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | TOUGH CHESS SIM, BUT ONLY FOR THOSE WITH NOBODY TO PLAY. | 87 |
| CITY OF THE LOST CHILDREN | £44.95 | PSYGNOSIS | 1 | ✓ | | | | | GRAPHICALLY BRILLIANT BUT INCREDIBLY ANNOYING ADVENTURE GAME. | 68 |
| COMMAND AND CONQUER | £44.99 | VIRGIN | 1 | ✓ | | | | | CONQUER THE WORLD IN THIS FAST-PACED STRATEGY GAME. A CLASSIC. | 91 |
| CONTRA: LEGACY OF WAR | £44.95 | KONAMI | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | 3D GLASSES | 3D VERSION OF THE CLASSIC KONAMI SHOOT 'EM UP. SOLID BLASTING ACTION. | 83 |
| COOL BOARDERS | £44.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | | | | YOU CAN'T PLAY TWO PLAYERS, BUT THIS IS BRILLIANT SNOWBOARDING FUN. | 91 |
| CRASH BANDICOOT | £44.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | | | | FRUSTRATING IT MIGHT BE, BUT THIS IS ONE OF THE BEST PLATFORMERS AROUND. | 86 |
| CRITICOM | £44.99 | IMAGINEER | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | GREAT GRAPHICS, BUT THIS 3D BEAT 'EM UP STILL LOSES OUT TO TEKKEN. | 82 |
| CROW 2 | £44.99 | ACCLAIM | 1 | ✓ | | | | | DIRE FIGHTING GAME BASED ON THE MOVIE WHICH SHOULD BE LEFT WELL ALONE. | 33 |

| NAME | PRICE | COMPANY | | | | | | | COMMENT | SCORE |
|-----------------------------|--------|-----------------|-----|---|---|---|---|--------------|---|-------|
| CRUSADER | £44.95 | EA | 1 | ✓ | | | | | TOP-NOTCH SHOOTING AND EXPLORING ACTION IN THIS LONE COMMANDO GAME. | 85 |
| CRYPT KILLER | £44.99 | KONAMI | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | LIGHT GUN | POSSIBLY THE WORST LIGHT GUN GAME EVER. STAY AWAY! | 27 |
| CYBER SLED | £39.99 | NAMCO | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | A DULL ARCADE SHOOTING GAME WHICH SHOWS EVEN NAMCO MAKE MISTAKES. | 69 |
| CYBER SPEED | £39.99 | MINDSCAPE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | A SPACE AGE RACING GAME ON WIRES. NOT A WIP EOUT BEATER. | 88 |
| CYBERIA | £39.99 | INTERPLAY | 1 | ✓ | | | | | HANDFUL OF SHOOTING AND PUZZLE GAMES WHICH FAIL TO IMPRESS. | 60 |
| D | £44.99 | ACCLAIM | 1 | ✓ | | | | | STUNNING BUT SHORT. GREAT GRAPHICS BUT ONLY AN HOUR TO COMPLETE. | 83 |
| DARK FORCES | £44.99 | VIRGIN | 1 | ✓ | | | | | ENGROSSING STAR WARS DOOM CLONE WITH DATED GRAPHICS. | 84 |
| DARKLIGHT | £44.95 | EA | 1 | ✓ | | | | | DIFFICULT, YET STUNNING 3D SPACE GAME WITH SOLID GAMEPLAY. | 87 |
| DARKSTALKERS | £44.99 | VIRGIN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | STREET FIGHTER MEETS HORROR CHARACTERS MEETS AVERAGE GAMEPLAY. | 78 |
| DAVIS CUP TENNIS | £44.95 | TELSTAR | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | | THIS MANAGES TO BE ONE OF THE WORST PLAYSTATION TITLES TO DATE. | 50 |
| DEFCON 5 | £49.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | | | | 3D ADVENTURE INVOLVING MORE WANDERING THAN ACTION. | 72 |
| DESCENT | £44.99 | INTERPLAY | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | DOOM IN SPACESHIPS. GREAT IDEA, GREAT GAME. | 90 |
| DESCENT 2 | £44.99 | INTERPLAY | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | NOT MANY IMPROVEMENTS ON THE ORIGINAL, BUT STILL A GOOD SHOOT 'EM UP. | 82 |
| DESTRUCTION DERBY | £49.99 | PSYGNOSIS | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | NEGGON/WHEEL | LENGTHY PLAY REVEALS A SHALLOW GAME, GREAT WITH TWO PLAYERS THOUGH. | 89 |
| DESTRUCTION DERBY 2 | £44.95 | PSYGNOSIS | 1 | ✓ | | | | NEGGON/WHEEL | A HUGE IMPROVEMENT ON THE ORIGINAL, WITH FASTER CARS AND WIDER TRACKS. | 89 |
| DIE HARD TRILOGY | £44.99 | FOX INTERACTIVE | 1 | ✓ | | ✓ | | GUN/WHEEL | THREE GAMES FOR THE PRICE OF ONE, AND TOP MOVIE ACTION IN ALL OF THEM. | 92 |
| DISCWORLD | £39.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | ✓ | | | COMEDY ADVENTURE WITH SOME OF THE MOST ANNOYING PUZZLES EVER. | 71 |
| DOOM | £44.99 | GT | 1-2 | | ✓ | | | | THE ORIGINAL 3D MAZE SHOOT 'EM UP. STILL OZZES PLAYABILITY. | 92 |
| EARTHWORM JIM 2 | £44.95 | VIRGIN | 1 | ✓ | | | | | CONVERSION OF A SNES CLASSIC THAT MANAGES TO BE A LESSER COPY. | 79 |
| EPIDEMIC | £34.95 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | | | | SEQUEL TO KILEAK THE BLOOD FAILS TO IMPROVE ON A POOR GAME. | 64 |
| ESPN EXTREME GAMES | £39.99 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | ODDBALL SPORTS RACING GAME WITH A TOUCH OF VIOLENCE. BRILLIANT FUN. | 90 |
| EXCALIBUR 2555AD | £44.99 | TELSTAR | 1 | ✓ | | | | | SOLID ADVENTURE GAME FEATURING PLENTY OF COMBAT AND MAGIC. | 85 |
| EXHUMED | £44.95 | BMG | 1 | ✓ | | | | | ONE OF THE BEST AND MOST CHALLENGING DOOM-STYLE GAMES AROUND. | 90 |
| EXTREME PINBALL | £44.95 | EA | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | POOR PINBALL TITLE, WITH UNREALISTIC BALL MOVEMENT. | 44 |
| FADE TO BLACK | £44.99 | EA | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | ABSORBING 3D SEQUEL TO FLASHBACK. PLENTY TO SEE, DO AND SHOOT. | 91 |
| FIFA '96 | £44.99 | EA | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | | FOOTIE GAME WITH LITTLE CONTROL OVER PLAYERS AND BAD CAMERA VIEWS. | 92 |
| FIFA '97 | £44.99 | EA | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | | NOT MUCH IMPROVEMENT OVER '96 SINCE IT PLAYS SO VERY SLOWLY. | 64 |
| FINAL DOOM | £44.99 | GT | 1-2 | | ✓ | ✓ | | | THIRTY NEW DOOM LEVELS TO EXPLORE, BUT STILL THE SAME GAME. | 89 |
| FIRESTORM: THUNDERHAWK 2 | £44.99 | CORE | 1 | ✓ | | | | | THE 3D GRAPHICS AREN'T PERFECT BUT THIS IS STILL A GREAT HELICOPTER GAME. | 86 |
| FIRO AND KLAWD | £44.95 | BMG | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | INTERESTING BUDDY COP GAME, LET DOWN BY HAVING NO SAVE GAME OPTION. | 82 |
| FLOATING RUNNER | £44.99 | XING | 1 | ✓ | | | | | PLAYABLE 3D PLATFORMER WITH STRANGE VIEWPOINT AND CONTROLS. | 81 |
| FORMULA 1 | £44.99 | PSYGNOSIS | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | NEGGON/WHEEL | THE ULTIMATE SIMULATION DRIVING GAME. | 93 |
| GALAXIAN 3 | £49.99 | NAMCO | 1-4 | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | NEGGON | GRAPHICALLY IMPRESSIVE SHOOT 'EM UP, BUT LACKING IN PLAYER INTERACTION. | 36 |
| GEX | £44.99 | BMG | 1 | ✓ | | | | | A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF A DULL PLATFORMER. | 68 |
| GOAL STORM | £39.99 | KONAMI | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | LARGE SPRITES IN THIS FOOTBALL GAME, WHICH MOVE TOO SLOWLY BY FAR. | 66 |
| GRID RUN | £44.95 | VIRGIN | 1-4 | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | 'TAG' GAME WHICH IS ONLY FUN IN MULTIPLAYER MODE. | 64 |
| GUNSHIP | £44.99 | MICROPROSE | 1 | ✓ | | | | | COMPLEX AND PLAYABLE HELICOPTER SIM, BUT NOT THAT REALISTIC. | 83 |
| HARDCORE 4X4 | £44.99 | GREMLIN | 1 | ✓ | | | | WHEEL | DULL ALL-TERRAIN RACING GAME WITH TOO FEW TRACKS. | 83 |
| HEBEREKE POPOITTO | £39.99 | SUNSOFT | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | TWO PLAYER PUZZLE GAME. FUN, BUT BUST-A-MOVE 2 IS BETTER. | 42 |
| HEXEN | £44.95 | GT | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | THE GRAPHICS MAY BE SLOW AND BLOCKY, BUT THIS DOOM CLONE HAS DEPTH. | 84 |
| HI-OCTANE | £44.99 | BULLFROG | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | TEDIOUS RACING GAME LACKING IN SUBSTANCE. | 76 |
| INDEPENDENCE DAY | £44.95 | FOX INTERACTIVE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | DATED SHOOT 'EM UP BASED LOOSELY ON THE HIT FILM. | 69 |
| IMPACT RACING | £44.95 | JVC | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | UNUSUAL RACING GAME WHICH MIXES DESTRUCTION DERBY WITH MAD MAX. | 82 |
| IN THE HUNT | £39.99 | THQ | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | 2D SUBMARINE SHOOT 'EM UP WITH PLENTY OF THINGS TO FIRE AT. | 79 |
| INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD | £44.99 | KONAMI | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | | AN ADDICTIVE SPORTS SIM THAT EXCELS IN ITS MULTI-PLAYER MODE. | 93 |
| ISS DELUXE | £44.95 | KONAMI | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | STRAIGHT CONVERSION OF THE CLASSIC SNES FOOTIE GAME. | 66 |
| ISS PRO | £44.99 | KONAMI | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | THE GREATEST FOOTBALL GAME ON THE PLAYSTATION. ENOUGH SAID. | 92 |
| IRON AND BLOOD | £44.95 | ACCLAIM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | AVERAGE 3D BEAT 'EM UP WITH A FANTASY THEME. | 67 |
| IRON MAN | £44.99 | ACCLAIM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | SHODDY DRIVEL. A BAD GAME AND A WASTE OF A GREAT COMICS LICENCE. | 22 |
| JET RIDER | £44.99 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | INNOVATIVE RACER IS LET DOWN BY POOR GRAPHICS AND GAMEPLAY. | 63 |
| JOHNNY BAZOOKATONE | £39.99 | US GOLD | 1 | ✓ | | | | | ROCK 'N' ROLL PLATFORMER WITH POOR GAMEPLAY. | 60 |
| JONAH LOMU RUGBY | £44.99 | CODEMASTERS | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | | BRILLIANT RUGBY SIMULATION, PLAGUED BY FIDDLY CONTROLS. | 84 |
| JUMPING FLASH | £39.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | | | | SUPERB 3D PLATFORMER WHICH SADLY HAS TOO FEW LEVELS. | 89 |
| JUMPING FLASH 2 | £44.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | | | | PERFECT SEQUEL TO JUMPING FLASH, BUT STILL NOT ENOUGH LEVELS. | 88 |
| K1 | £44.99 | THQ | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | SUBSTANDARD BEAT 'EM UP WITH REASONABLE GRAPHICS. | 55 |
| KRAZY IVAN | £39.99 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF GRAPHICS OVER PLAYABILITY IN THIS ROBOT GAME. | 73 |
| LITTLE BIG ADVENTURE | £44.99 | EA | 1 | ✓ | | | | | BRILLIANT CONVERSION OF THE PC ADVENTURE CLASSIC. | 90 |
| LEGACY OF KAIN | £44.99 | BMG | 1 | ✓ | | | | | VAMPIRE ACTION/ADVENTURE GAME OFFERING A HUGE ENJOYABLE CHALLENGE | 92 |
| LOADED | £39.99 | GREMLIN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ACTION PACKED BLASTER BUT LACKING IN VARIETY. | 75 |
| LOMAX IN LEMMINGLAND | £44.95 | PSYGNOSIS | 1 | ✓ | | | | | LEMMINGS INSPIRED PLATFORMER WHICH FAILS TO IMPRESS. | 70 |
| LONE SOLDIER | £39.99 | TELSTAR | 1 | ✓ | | | | | COMMANDO IN 3D BUT SADLY IT'S ALL TOO SLOW. | 72 |
| LOST VIKINGS 2 | £44.99 | INTERPLAY | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | | AVERAGE ARCADE GAME WHICH OFFERS LITTLE ORIGINALITY. | 63 |

| NAME | PRICE | COMPANY | | | | | | | COMMENT | SCORE |
|----------------------------|--------|-------------|-----|---|---|---|---|--------------|--|-------|
| MACHINE HUNTER | £44.95 | EIDOS | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | TOP-DOWN SHOOT 'EM UP WHICH TAKES ON LOADED AND GIVES IT A KICKING. | 88 |
| MADDEN NFL '97 | £44.99 | EA | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | SOLID AMERICAN FOOTBALL SIMULATION WITH GREAT DEPTH. | 86 |
| MAGIC CARPET | £44.99 | BULLFROG | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | FAST 3D SORCERY SHOOT 'EM UP WITH MANY LEVELS TO EXPLORE. | 90 |
| MECHWARRIOR 2 | £44.99 | ACTIVISION | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | GIANT ROBOTS ABOUND IN THIS QUALITY 3D SHOOT 'EM UP. | 83 |
| MICKY'S WILD ADVENTURE | £39.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | AVERAGE PLATFORM GAME WHICH FAILS TO SET THE PULSE RACING. | 66 |
| MICRO MACHINES V3 | £44.95 | CODEMASTERS | 1-8 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | THE BEST MULTI-PLAYER GAME ON THE PLAYSTATION. A RACING CLASSIC. | 94 |
| MONSTER TRUCKS | £44.95 | PSYGNOSIS | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | A GOOD IDEA BADLY IMPLEMENTED IN THIS OFF-ROAD RACER. | 82 |
| MORTAL KOMBAT 3 | £49.99 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | MK FANS WILL LOVE THIS, BUT STREET FIGHTER STILL RULES THE 2D SCENE. | 90 |
| MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY | £44.95 | GT | 1-8 | ✓ | | | | - | VIRTUALLY EVERY MK CHARACTER IS HERE, SO HARDCORE FANS WILL BE HAPPY. | 90 |
| MOTOR TOON GRAND PRIX 2 | £44.95 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | - | COMIC RACING GAME BEATS THE ORIGINAL IN EVERY DEPARTMENT. | 85 |
| MYST | £44.95 | PSYGNOSIS | 1 | ✓ | | ✓ | | - | POINT AND CLICK ADVENTURE WITH STATIC SCREENS. NOT TOO EXCITING. | 76 |
| NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 1 | £39.99 | NAMCO | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | COMPILATION OF NAMCO'S ARCADE HITS, INCLUDING PACMAN. | 84 |
| NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 2 | £39.99 | NAMCO | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | NOT AS STRONG AS THE FIRST COLLECTION, UNLESS YOU LOVE XEVIOUS. | 63 |
| NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 3 | £39.99 | NAMCO | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | BETTER THAN VOLUME 2 BUT STILL MORE POOR GAMES THAN CLASSICS. | 71 |
| NANOTEK WARRIOR | £39.99 | VIRGIN | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | ENJOYABLE SHOOTING ACTION IS SPOILED BY A LACK OF LEVELS. | 77 |
| NASCAR RACING | £44.95 | SIERRA | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | POOR DAYS OF THUNDER-STYLE RIP OFF. | 35 |
| NBA IN THE ZONE | £44.99 | KONAMI | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | ROUGHER LOOKING THAN TOTAL NBA, BUT THIS HAS MORE PACE AND ACILITY. | 85 |
| NBA IN THE ZONE 2 | £44.95 | KONAMI | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | THE IMPROVED GRAPHICS MAKE THIS SEQUEL A GREAT IMPROVEMENT. | 90 |
| NBA JAM EXTREME | £44.95 | ACCLAIM | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | BASKETBALL GAME WITH VARIOUS OUTRAGEOUS COMIC FEATURES. | 80 |
| NBA JAM TOURNAMENT EDITION | £39.99 | ACCLAIM | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | CONVERSION OF THE COIN-OP WITH 2D CHARACTERS GOING TWO-ON-TWO. | 86 |
| NBA LIVE '96 | £44.99 | EA | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | EA'S BASKETBALL GAME USES THE FIFA '96 GRAPHICS ENGINE AND IT SHOWS. | 81 |
| NBA LIVE '97 | £44.95 | EA | 1-8 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | INSTINCTIVE MOVES AND PASSES MAKE FOR A SUPERB MULTIPLAYER GAME. | 90 |
| NEED FOR SPEED | £44.99 | EA | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | - | SECOND-RATE RIDGE RACER WITH NOT MUCH SPEED AT ALL. | 70 |
| NEED FOR SPEED 2 | £44.95 | EA | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | BAD LOOKING AND WORSE PLAYING SEQUEL TO NEED FOR SPEED. | 49 |
| NFL GAMEDAY | £44.99 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | AVERAGE IN EVERY DEPARTMENT, THIS IS BEATEN BY MADDEN IN ALL RESPECTS. | 82 |
| NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB | £39.99 | ACCLAIM | 1-8 | ✓ | | | | - | BLOCKY GRAPHICS HIDE A COMPETENT SPORTS SIM. | 75 |
| NHL '97 | £44.99 | ACCLAIM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | POLYGON-BASED SPRITES MAKE THIS A GOOD LOOKING ICE HOCKEY SIM. | 91 |
| NHL FACE OFF | £44.99 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | GREAT PLAYABILITY MAKES FOR A FRANTIC GAME OF ICE HOCKEY IN THIS SIM. | 85 |
| NHL FACE OFF '97 | £34.95 | SCEE | 1-8 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | EXTRA FEATURES CAN'T SAVE THIS FROM BEING A VERY AVERAGE SEQUEL. | 65 |
| NOVA STORM | £39.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | DIRE SHOOT 'EM UP WHICH SHOULD BE LEFT WELL ALONE. | 55 |
| OFF WORLD INTERCEPTOR | £39.99 | BMG | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | 4X4S BOUNCE ACROSS THE MOON IN THIS DULL SPACE RACING GAME. | 68 |
| OLYMPIC GAMES | £44.95 | US GOLD | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | A POOR COMPETITOR FOR INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD. | 70 |
| OLYMPIC SOCCER | £44.95 | US GOLD | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | STILL ONE OF THE MOST PLAYABLE FOOTBALL GAMES ON THE PLAYSTATION. | 93 |
| ONSIDE | £44.99 | TELSTAR | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | THE MOST INCREDIBLY BLAND FOOTBALL GAME TO DATE. | 65 |
| OVERBLOOD | £44.99 | EA | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | FRUSTRATING RESIDENT EVIL STYLE GAME WITH LOW ACTION CONTENT. | 76 |
| PANDEMONIUM! | £44.95 | BMG | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | SHAMES OTHER PLATFORMERS WITH ITS GRAPHICS AND INSTINCTIVE GAMEPLAY. | 91 |
| PANZER GENERAL | £44.99 | MINDSCAPE | 1-2 | ✓ | | ✓ | | - | FULL-BLOWN STRATEGY GAME WHICH PLAYERS WILL FIND HARD WORK. | 59 |
| PERFECT WEAPON | £44.95 | EA | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | A POOR MAN'S BEAT 'EM UP/ADVENTURE EXCELLING IN NEITHER GENRE. | 51 |
| PGA TOUR '96 | £44.99 | EA | 1-8 | ✓ | | | | - | A DODGY PUTTING SYSTEM LETS DOWN THIS GOLF SIM. | 69 |
| PGA TOUR '97 | £44.95 | EA | 1-8 | ✓ | | | | - | GREAT LOOKING GOLF GAME, BUT STILL SUFFERS DUE TO ITS CONTROL SYSTEM. | 65 |
| PITBALL | £44.95 | WARNER | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | SPEEDBALL-TYPE GAME WITH RUN-OF-THE-MILL LOOKS AND PLAYABILITY. | 73 |
| PLAYER MANAGER | £44.95 | ANGO | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | PREDICTABLE RESULTS ABOUND IN THIS FOOTBALL MANAGEMENT GAME. | 68 |
| PO 'ED | £44.99 | WARNER | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | DOOM CLONE WHICH SHOWS PROMISE BUT NEVER DELIVERS. | 76 |
| PORSCHE CHALLENGE | £34.95 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | NEGCON/WHEEL | LACK OF VARIETY IN TRACKS AND VEHICLES LETS THIS RACING GAME DOWN. | 80 |
| POWERPLAY HOCKEY '96 | £44.95 | VIRGIN | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | SOLID, FAST-PACED ICE HOCKEY SIM. | 85 |
| PRIMAL RAGE | £44.99 | WARNER | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | THIS 2D BEAT 'EM UP IS FAR TOO AWKWARD TO PLAY. | 77 |
| PRO PINBALL: THE WEB | £44.95 | EMPIRE | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | ONLY ONE PINBALL TABLE, BUT WHAT A TABLE. HANDLES LIKE THE REAL THING. | 93 |
| PROJECT OVERKILL | £44.95 | KONAMI | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | HI-TECH VERSION OF THE OLD BEZERK COIN-OP WITH LOTS OF BLOOD. | 79 |
| PSYCHIC DETECTIVE | £44.99 | EA | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | SURPRISINGLY PLAYABLE FMV INTERACTIVE MOVIE. | 84 |
| PSYCHIC FORCE | £44.95 | ACCLAIM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | ENJOYABLE 3D BEAT 'EM UP HAS MIND POWERS BUT LACKS DEPTH. | 76 |
| RAGE RACER | £39.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | | | NEGCON/WHEEL | LATEST CLASSIC INCARNATION OF THE RIDGE RACER SERIES. BUY IT NOW! | 93 |
| RAGING SKIES | £44.99 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | VERY AVERAGE FLIGHT GAME LACKING IN PLAYABILITY. | 73 |
| RAIDEN PROJECT | £39.99 | UBI OCEAN | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | ENJOYABLE BUT LIMITED CONVERSION OF AN OLD COIN-OP. | 72 |
| RALLY CROSS | £34.99 | SCEE | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | ANALOGUE PAD | ROLLING CARS APLENTY IN THIS FUN RACER, AND A FOUR PLAYER MODE TOO! | 83 |
| RAPID RELOAD | £39.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | RATHER ENTERTAINING PLATFORM SHOOT 'EM UP. | 80 |
| RAYMAN | £34.99 | UBI SOFT | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | REPETITIVE PLATFORM GAME. | 59 |
| RAY STORM | £39.99 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | FLASHY AND ADDICTIVE VERTICALLY SCROLLING SHOOT 'EM UP. | 83 |
| RAY TRACERS | £34.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | BRILLIANT CHASE HQ STYLE GAME LET DOWN BY INCREDIBLY SHORT LIFESPAN. | 73 |
| REBEL ASSAULT II | £44.99 | LUCASARTS | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | REPITION AND LOW LASTABILITY LET THIS STAR WARS ROMP DOWN. | 46 |
| RELOADED | £44.95 | GREMLIN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | MARGINALLY BETTER THAN THE ORIGINAL, WHICH WASN'T THAT GOOD. | 73 |
| RESIDENT EVIL | £49.99 | VIRGIN | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | THIS HORROR ADVENTURE IS ONE OF THE MOST PERFECT GAMES EVER. | 94 |
| RETURN FIRE | £44.95 | WARNER | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | EXCELLENT TWO PLAYER FUN IN THIS MILITARY CAPTURE THE FLAG GAME. | 91 |

| NAME | PRICE | COMPANY | | | | | | | COMMENT | SCORE |
|-------------------------------|--------|---------------|------|---|---|---|---|--------------|--|-------|
| REVOLUTION X | £39.99 | ACCLAIM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | ROCKERS AEROSMITH STAR IN THIS AWFUL SHOOT 'EM UP. AVOID. | 48 |
| RIDGE RACER | £39.99 | NAMCO | 1 | ✓ | | | | NEGCON/WHEEL | EXCELLENT RACING GAME, SADLY LACKING IN TRACKS. | 88 |
| RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION | £49.99 | NAMCO | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | NEGCON/WHEEL | AN IMPROVEMENT ON THE ORIGINAL, NOW WITH A TWO-PLAYER LINK UP MODE. | 87 |
| RISE 2 RESURRECTION | £44.99 | ACCLAIM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | A MEDIOCRE BEAT 'EM UP. | 78 |
| RIOT | £44.95 | PSYGNOSIS | 1-16 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | SPEEDBALL-TYPE GAME OFFERS LITTLE. | 67 |
| ROAD RASH | £44.99 | EA | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | STRAIGHTFORWARD FIGHTING AND RACING GAME. | 64 |
| ROBOTON - X | £44.95 | GT | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | SIMPLE MINDED FUN IN THIS UPDATE OF AN ARCADE CLASSIC. | 66 |
| SAMPTRAS EXTREME TENNIS | £44.95 | CODEMASTERS | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | EASE OF PLAY MAKES THIS TENNIS GAME A JOY TO BEHOLD. | 89 |
| SENTIENT | £44.95 | PSYGNOSIS | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | AMBITIOUS BUT OVERLY COMPLEX ADVENTURE SET ON A SPACE SHIP. | 71 |
| SHELLSHOCK | £44.99 | CORE DESIGN | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | DULL AND REPETITIVE TANK GAME. | 75 |
| SHOCKWAVE | £39.99 | EA | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | EMPTY SHOOT 'EM UP WITH TINY SPRITES AGAINST BLAND BACKGROUNDS. | 56 |
| SIM CITY 2000 | £44.99 | MAXIS | 1 | ✓ | | ✓ | | - | RUN YOUR OWN CITY IN THIS ENGRASSING CONVERSION OF A PC CLASSIC. | 91 |
| SKELETON WARRIORS | £44.95 | VIRGIN | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | THIS LOOKS LIKE A 16BIT GAME, AND PLAYS EVEN WORSE. | 69 |
| SLAM 'N' JAM '96 | £44.95 | BMG | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | UNPLAYABLE BASKETBALL GAME. | 64 |
| SMASH COURT TENNIS | £44.95 | NAMCO | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | SLOW AND UNRESPONSIVE CONVERSION OF THE 16BIT CLASSIC. | 57 |
| SOCCER '97 | £44.95 | EIDOS | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | OLYMPIC SOCCER SEQUEL SUFFERS FROM AN OUTDATED GAME ENGINE. | 81 |
| SOUL BLADE | £34.95 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | NAMCO DO IT AGAIN WITH THIS CLASSIC WEAPONS-BASED BEAT 'EM UP. | 94 |
| SOVIET STRIKE | £44.99 | EA | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | 3D CHOPPER SHOOT EM' UP WITH GREAT GRAPHICS AND GAMEPLAY. | 92 |
| SPACE HULK | £44.95 | EA | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | NOT THE FASTEST GAME AROUND, BUT THIS IS A GOOD ACTION/STRATEGY MIX. | 84 |
| SPACE JAM | £44.95 | ACCLAIM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | UNINSPIRING MOVIE CASH-IN BASKETBALL GAME. | 65 |
| SPEEDSTER | £44.95 | PSYGNOSIS | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | TOP-DOWN RACING GAME CURIOUSLY LACKING IN SPEED. AND PLAYABILITY. | 64 |
| SPIDER | £39.99 | BMG | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | INNOVATIVE BUT ULTIMATELY AVERAGE PLATFORMER. | 70 |
| SPOT GOES TO HOLLYWOOD | £34.95 | VIRGIN | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | TOO LITTLE TOO LATE FOR THIS PASSABLE PLATFORMER. GREAT MUSIC THOUGH. | 77 |
| STAR GLADIATOR | £44.95 | VIRGIN/CAPCOM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | CAPCOM'S FIRST 3D BEAT 'EM UP, AND IT'S NOT HALF BAD. | 91 |
| STARFIGHTER 3000 | £44.95 | TELSTAR | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | NICE ENOUGH TO LOOK AT BUT ULTIMATELY A DULL SHOOT 'EM UP. | 80 |
| STARWINDER | £44.95 | MINDSCAPE | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | SIMPLISTIC RACING GAME WHERE EVERY LEVEL PLAYS THE SAME. | 59 |
| STEEL HARBINGER | £44.95 | MINDSCAPE | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | UNSPECTACULAR GRAPHICS ABOUND IN THIS OCCASIONALLY FUN SHOOT 'EM UP. | 79 |
| STREET FIGHTER ALPHA | £44.99 | VIRGIN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | UPDATE OF THE STREET FIGHTER SERIES WHICH INCLUDES NEW SUPER MOVES. | 91 |
| STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2 | £44.95 | VIRGIN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | CUSTOM COMBOS AND COUNTER MOVES BEAT IT'S PREDECESSOR HANDS DOWN. | 92 |
| STREET FIGHTER THE MOVIE | £39.99 | ACCLAIM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | A COMPLETE INSULT TO THE STREET FIGHTER NAME. | 67 |
| STREET RACER | £44.95 | UBISOFT | 1-8 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | A FAIR RACING GAME WITH PLENTY TO DO BUT NOT MUCH EXCITEMENT. | 79 |
| STRIKEPOINT: THE HEX MISSIONS | £44.95 | ELITE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | POOR HELICOPTER GAME. GO FOR SOVIET STRIKE INSTEAD. | 60 |
| STRIKER '96 | £39.99 | WARNER | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | ONE OF THE MORE SIMPLISTIC FOOTBALL GAMES. | 69 |
| SUIKODEN | £44.99 | KONAMI | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | SOLID RPG THAT ISN'T GOING TO SET THE WORLD ALIGHT BUT WORTH A LOOK. | 81 |
| SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER 2 | £39.95 | VIRGIN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | DEVILISHLY ADDICTIVE PUZZLE GAME FEATURING RYU, KEN AND FRIENDS. | 92 |
| SUPERSONIC RACERS | £44.95 | MINDSCAPE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | MICRO MACHINES-STYLE RACER DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH PACE TO ENTHRALL. | 74 |
| SWAGMAN | £44.99 | EIDOS | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | ARCADE ADVENTURE FUN APLENTY IN THIS GREAT LOOKING 2D GAME. | 85 |
| SYNDICATE WARS | £44.95 | EA | 1-4 | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | - | ULTRA COOL VIOLENT STRATEGY SHOOT 'EM UP WITH AMAZING 3D GRAPHICS. | 92 |
| TEKKEN | £39.99 | NAMCO | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | NAMCO'S FIRST 3D BEAT 'EM UP. SUPERB, BUT OVERSHADOWED BY ITS SEQUEL. | 93 |
| TEKKEN 2 | £49.99 | NAMCO | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | IMPROVES ON THE ORIGINAL IMMESURABLY. ONE OF THE BEST FIGHTING GAMES. | 95 |
| TEMPEST X3 | £34.99 | INTERPLAY | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | AN UPDATE OF A GREAT RETRO SHOOTER. | 80 |
| TENKA | £44.95 | PSYGNOSIS | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | POLYGON GRAPHICS CAN'T SAVE THIS AVERAGE DOOM-CLONE. | 82 |
| TEN PIN ALLEY | £44.95 | EA | 1-6 | ✓ | | | | - | THIS COULD HAVE BEEN GOOD FUN, BUT IT ENDS UP BEING A NOVELTY TITL. | 54 |
| TEST DRIVE: OFF ROAD | £39.99 | EIDOS | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | AVERAGE OFF-ROAD RACER MADE AWFUL BY DREADFUL POP-UP GRAPHICS. | 46 |
| THEME PARK | £44.99 | BULLFROG | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | ONE OF THE GENTLER 'SIM' GAMES AVAILABLE. | 85 |
| TIGER SHARK | £44.99 | GT | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | AN IMPOSSIBLY HIGH DIFFICULTY LEVEL RUINS THIS EXCELLENT SHOOT 'EM UP. | 72 |
| TIME COMMANDO | £44.99 | EA | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | UNUSUAL BUT FUN TIME-TRAVEL FIGHTING GAME. | 81 |
| TOBAL NO.1 | £44.99 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | A FAIR BEAT 'EM UP GREATLY IMPROVED BY THE ADDITION OF A QUEST MODE. | 91 |
| TOMB RAIDER | £44.95 | EIDOS | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | FEMALE INDIANA JONES ANTICS ON THE SONY. ONE OF THE BEST GAMES EVER. | 92 |
| TOP GUN: FIRE AT WILL | £44.95 | MICROPROSE | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | REPETITIVE MOVIE SPIN-OFF FLIGHT SIM. | 66 |
| TOTAL NBA '96 | £44.99 | SCEE | 1-8 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | SUPERB BASKETBALL GAME WITH INCREDIBLE ATTENTION TO DETAIL. | 83 |
| TOTAL NBA '97 | £34.95 | SCEE | 1-8 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | IMPROVED GRAPHICS AND GAMEPLAY MAKE THIS A WORTHY FOLLOW-UP. | 85 |
| TOKYO HIGHWAY BATTLE | £39.99 | THQ | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | SUB RAGE RACER GAME WITH AVERAGE GRAPHICS. | 77 |
| TRANSPORT TYCOON | £44.99 | OCEAN | 1 | ✓ | | ✓ | | - | BUILD ROADS, RAILWAYS, DOCKS AND AIRPORTS IN THIS GREAT GOD SIM. | 86 |
| TRASH IT | £44.95 | GT | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | PLATFORMER WITH GOOD IDEAS BUT LAKING IN IMMEDIATE ACTION. | 57 |



ACTUA GOLF 2.....83



AGENT ARMSTRONG.....75



BUBBLE BOBBLE.....74



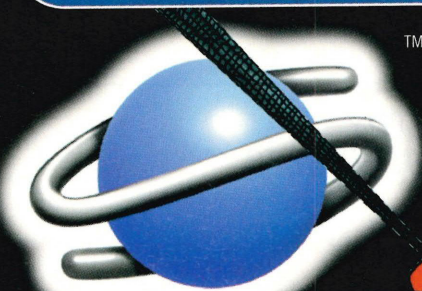
RAY STORM.....83



RAY TRACERS.....73

| NAME | PRICE | COMPANY | | | | | | | COMMENT | SCORE |
|-----------------------------|--------|---------------|-----|---|---|---|---|-------------|--|-------|
| TRUE PINBALL | £39.99 | OCEAN | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | FOUR TABLES IT MIGHT HAVE, BUT IT STILL LOSES OUT TO THE WEB'S ONE. | 82 |
| TUNNEL 81 | £44.99 | OCEAN | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | WIPEOUT CROSSES WITH DOOM IN THIS HIGH-SPEED SHOOT 'EM UP. | 89 |
| TWISTED METAL | £39.99 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | DESTROY THE SUBURBS IN THIS MAD MAX-STYLE CAR BATTLE. | 82 |
| TWISTED METAL 2 | £44.95 | SCEE | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | AN EXCELLENT SEQUEL WHICH IS GRANDER IN SCALE AND THRILLS. | 88 |
| VANDAL HEARTS | £44.95 | KONAMI | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | AVERAGE GRAPHICS DON'T SPOIL THIS HUGE PLAYABLE AND ENGROSSING RPG. | 86 |
| VICTORY BOXING | £44.95 | JVC | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | DEEPER THAN MOST FIGHTING GAMES, THIS TAKES SOME GETTING INTO. | 74 |
| VIRTUAL GOLF | £44.95 | CORE DESIGN | 1-4 | ✓ | | | | - | A POOR COUSIN TO ACTUA GOLF. | 57 |
| VIRTUAL POOL | £44.99 | INTERPLAY | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | A GREAT POOL GAME OFFERING REALISTIC SIMULATION. | 85 |
| V-RALLY | £44.99 | OCEAN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | SIMULATION RALLY GAME WITH OVER 40 TRACKS AND TOP LOOKS AND GAMEPLAY. | 94 |
| VR BASEBALL | £44.99 | INTERPLAY | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | A FINE CONVERSION OF THE SPORT, BUT UNLIKELY TO ATTRACT ANYONE BUT FANS. | 72 |
| V TENNIS | £44.95 | ACCLAIM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | MEDIOCRE TENNIS SIM THAT'S HARD TO GET INTO. | 75 |
| WARCRAFT 2 | £44.95 | EA | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | SUPERB FANTASY STRATEGY GAME IN COMMAND AND CONQUER MOULD. | 88 |
| WARGODS | £44.95 | GT | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | DERIVATIVE 3D FIGHTING GAME WITH MUSHY GRAPHICS AND LOUSY GAMEPLAY. | 59 |
| WARHAMMER | £44.99 | MINDSCAPE | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | THIS ABSORBING WARGAME HAS DEPTH, IF NOT LOOKS. | 86 |
| WARHAWK | £39.99 | SCEE | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | INSTANTLY PLAYABLE FLYING GAME WITH GREAT WEAPONS. | 82 |
| WCW VS THE WORLD | £39.99 | THQ | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | BRILLIANT WRESTLING GAME WITH 60 CHARACTERS, INCLUDING HULK HOGAN. | 88 |
| WILLIAMS ARCADE CLASSICS | £29.99 | GT | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | RETRO COMPILATION WITH FIVE GOOD GAMES OUT OF SIX, INCLUDING DEFENDER. | 89 |
| WING COMMANDER III | £44.99 | EA | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | SUPERB MOVIE SEQUENCES MIX WITH POOR GAMEPLAY IN THIS SPACE OPERA. | 80 |
| WING COMMANDER IV | £44.95 | EA | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | BETTER FMV AND WORSE GAMEPLAY THAN WC III LET THIS GAME DOWN BADLY. | 50 |
| WIPEOUT | £49.99 | PSYGNOSIS | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | NEGCN | ULTRA-FAST STYLISH RACING GAME. A MUST FOR SPEED FREAKS EVERYWHERE. | 91 |
| WIPEOUT 2097 | £44.95 | PSYGNOSIS | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | NEGCN/WHEEL | BETTER IN EVERY RESPECT, THIS IMPROVES THE GRAPHICS AND IS EVEN FASTER. | 94 |
| WORLD CUP GOLF | £39.99 | US GOLD | 1-8 | ✓ | | | | - | COMPETENT GOLF GAME WITH GREAT GRAPHICS. | 80 |
| WORMS | £39.99 | OCEAN | 1-4 | ✓ | | | | - | MULTI-PLAYER JOY WILL BE YOURS IN THIS FABULOUS BATTLE GAME. | 82 |
| WWF IN YOUR HOUSE | £44.95 | ACCLAIM | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | BELOW-AVERAGE WRESTLING GAME WHICH OFFERS LITTLE AND PROVIDES LESS. | 48 |
| WWF WRESTLEMANIA | £39.99 | ACCLAIM | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | ENTERTAINING FIGHTING GAME WITH DEADLY SPECIAL MOVES. | 83 |
| X2 | £44.95 | TEAM 17/OCEAN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | TEDIOUS SHOOT 'EM UP WHICH IS FAR TOO DIFFICULT. | 58 |
| X-COM: ENEMY UNKNOWN | £44.99 | MICROPROSE | 1 | ✓ | | ✓ | | - | STRATEGY GAMING AT IT'S VERY BEST AS YOU TAKE ON ALIEN INVADERS. | 88 |
| X-COM: TERROR FROM THE DEEP | £44.99 | MICROPROSE | 1 | ✓ | | ✓ | | - | X-COM UNDERWATER, EVERYTHING ELSE IS THE SAME. | 82 |
| ZEITGEIST (JUPITER STRIKE) | £39.99 | ACCLAIM | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | SLOW, CLUMSY 3D SHOOTING GAME WHICH LACKS APPEAL. | 43 |
| ZERO DIVIDE | £44.99 | OCEAN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | A SOUND ENOUGH FIGHTING GAME WHICH DOESN'T AMAZE. | 72 |

| IMPORT GAMES | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|------------|-----|---|---|--|---|---|--------------|--|----|
| CASTLEVANIA | IMPORT | KONAMI | 1 | | | | | | | SUPERB MIX OF ACTION AND DEPTH MAKES THIS THE BEST PLATFORMER AROUND. | 91 |
| DOUBLE DRAGON | IMPORT | TECMO | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | THIS BEARS LITTLE RESEMBLANCE TO THE COIN-OP AND IS EXTREMELY DULL. | 49 |
| DYNASTY WARS II | IMPORT | CAPCOM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | THERE'S LITTLE THOUGHT REQUIRED IN THIS ACTION-PACKED SAMURAI GAME. | 68 |
| EXECTOR | IMPORT | ARC | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | | LOADED-STYLE GAME WITH EVEN LESS PLAYABILITY. | 62 |
| FIRE PRO WRESTLING | IMPORT | HUMAN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | THE WRESTLERS LOOK GREAT, BUT THE GAME IS DULL. | 63 |
| GUNBIRD | IMPORT | ATLUS | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | INITIALLY A FUN SHOOT 'EM UP WHICH PROVIDES SOME SHORT-LIVED LAUGHS. | 74 |
| HEBERKE POPOITTO | IMPORT | SUNSOFT | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | BASIC FUN PUZZLER, BUT BUST A MOVE 2 IS BETTER. | 74 |
| HERMIE HOPPERHEAD | IMPORT | SONY | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | | FRUSTRATING, REPETITIVE AND JUST A PLAIN AWFUL PLATFORM GAME. | 38 |
| HORNED OWL | IMPORT | SONY | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | LIGHT GUN | THE FIRST PLAYSTATION LIGHT GUN GAME, AND ONE OF THE MOST TEDIOUS. | 68 |
| HYPER FINAL MATCH TENNIS | IMPORT | HUMAN | 1-4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | - | | BAD ANIMATION AND POOR GAMEPLAY COMBINE TO MAKE AN AWFUL GAME. | 63 |
| HYPER FORMATION SOCCER | IMPORT | HUMAN | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | FOOTBALL GAME WITH OVERLY COMPLEX CONTROLS AND POOR GRAPHICS. | 33 |
| MEGAMAN X3 | IMPORT | CAPCOM | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | | EXCELLENT PLAYSTATION ADDITION TO THE LONG RUNNING PLATFORMER SERIES. | 81 |
| METAL JACKET | IMPORT | SOLAN | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | | CUSTOMISE YOUR GIANT ROBOTS, THEN LET THEM LOOSE IN THIS DULL GAME. | 65 |
| MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM | IMPORT | BANDAI | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | | EXTREMELY DULL ROBOT-BASED SHOOT 'EM UP. AVOID. | 37 |
| MOTOR TOON GP | IMPORT | SONY | 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ | | | - | | CUTE RACING GAME WHICH LACKS SPEED. THE SEQUEL IS FAR SUPERIOR. | 51 |
| NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 4 | IMPORT | NAMCO | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | WEAKEST OF THE 5 NAMCO RETRO COLLECTIONS, ONLY PAC LAND STANDS OUT. | 67 |
| NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 5 | IMPORT | NAMCO | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | PAC-MANIA, METRO CROSS AND DRAGON SPIRIT PEP UP THIS RETRO COLLECTION. | 79 |
| PARAPPA THE RAPPER | IMPORT | SONY | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | | VERY ORIGINAL AND FUN VIDEOGAME VERSION OF 'SIMON SAYS'. | 82 |
| POWER INSTINCT 2 | IMPORT | ATLUS | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | ONE OF THE WORST FIGHTING GAMES EVER, FEATURING KUNG-FU GRANNIES! | 48 |
| REVERTION | IMPORT | TECMO | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | | BIZARRE 3D BATTLE GAME. GRAPHICALLY STUNNING, BUT FAR TOO EASY. | 21 |
| SPEED KING | IMPORT | KONAMI | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | | SLOW, BORING, DULL. ALL ARE TRUE OF THIS COMPLETELY PANTS RACING GAME. | 45 |
| STAHLFEDER | IMPORT | SINTOS | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | | A BASIC, YET ENJOYABLE SHOOT 'EM UP. | 77 |
| STREET FIGHTER II (INT. MOVIE) | IMPORT | CAPCOM | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | | UNPLAYABLE ATTEMPT TO MAKE A STREET FIGHTER "INTERACTIVE MOVIE". | 54 |
| SUPER BIG BROTHER | IMPORT | NCS | 1 | ✓ | | | | - | | SHOOT 'EM UP STARRING UNDERPANT-WEARING HERO. TOTALLY SURREAL. | 53 |
| SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER 2 | IMPORT | CAPCOM | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | INTENSELY ADDICTIVE PUZZLE GAME STARRING RYU, KEN AND THEIR CHUMS. | 82 |
| TOBAL 2 | IMPORT | SQUARESOFT | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | ANALOGUE PAD | SUPERB FIGHTING GAME WITH ADDITIONAL QUEST MODE. A BRILLIANT SEQUEL. | 82 |
| TOSHINDEN 3 | IMPORT | TAKARA | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | DERIVATIVE FIGHTING GAME THAT CAN'T STAND UP TO NAMCO'S GAMES. | 76 |
| TOSHINDEN KIDS | IMPORT | TAKARA | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | POLISHED BUT SIMPLISTIC VERSION OF TOSHINDEN AIMED AT YOUNGER GAMERS. | 60 |
| TWIN BEE | IMPORT | KONAMI | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | TWO SHOOTING STYLES DOESN'T MAKE THIS DATED GAME ANY BETTER. | 55 |
| TWO-TEN KAKU | IMPORT | CLUB DEP | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | RUN OF THE MILL VERTICAL SHOOT 'EM UP WHICH OFFERS NOTHING NEW. | 76 |
| XEVIOUS 3D/G+ | IMPORT | NAMCO | 1-2 | ✓ | | | | - | | XEVIOUS GETS A DULL 3D MAKEOVER IN THIS RETRO COMPILATION. | 60 |



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MORE ITEMS OF **MERCHANDISE** CURRENTLY AVAILABLE THAT WE BELIEVE WILL BE OF INTEREST TO **PLAYSTATION GAMERS** EVERYWHERE.

BOOKS, BOOKS AND MORE BOOKS! THE ALIENS RETURN IN A SERIES OF CHEST-BURSTING NEW ADVENTURES, AND MULDER AND SCULLY ARE ON THE CASE IN A NEW SELECTION OF GRAPHIC MYSTERIES. AND THE SIMPSONS ARE LAID BARE FOR ALL TO SEE. SHUDDER.

BOOKS

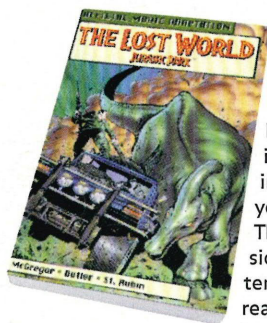
THE LOST WORLD: OFFICIAL MOVIE ADAPTATION

PRICE: £4.99
RELEASED BY: TITAN BOOKS
RATING: ★★

There was no way The Lost World was going to be as awe-inspiring as its predecessor. In the PSP office, opinion is split. Andrew and Alex think it is excellent, Jon and Steve hate it with a vengeance. One thing we do agree on though, is that this book is a very poor interpretation of the film. The Lost World was never exactly big on plot, and was instead a number of special effect showcases and dino attacks. This graphical adaptation fails to do even these justice, and as such presents a very flat portrayal of the film.

The graphical style is reminiscent of a kids comic, and the low price also indicates this is intended for the younger market. That said, the occasionally gory content means this isn't really kiddie material - not that it

stopped Spielberg getting a PG! The illustrations range from adequate to poor, with the dinosaurs constantly changing in scale, and the representations of Messrs Goldblum, Postlethwaite and Moore looking very dodgy indeed. Some of the dinosaurs suffer very badly too, with the shape of the T-Rex's head changing constantly and the Raptors occasionally losing their eyes - only the Comys get away lightly! The adaptation also seems to have been taken from an early draft of the script, with several scenes cut back to the bone. These include the Raptor attack in the field, and the subsequent chase scene in the disused town. Thankfully though, a couple of the movie's cheesier elements (the conveniently-placed gymnast heroine, for example) have been ignored completely, indicating some taste at least on the part of the artists! In all, this Official



Movie Adaptation comes across as a quick cash-in. It is a poor representation of a weak story, and the fiver would be better spent going to see the film again. Or spending it on a burger or two.

ALIENS: LABYRINTH

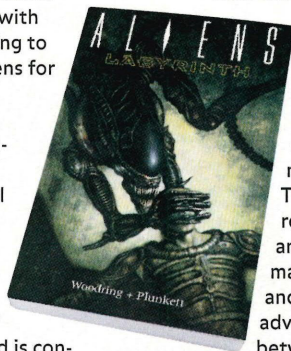
PRICE: £11.99
RELEASED BY: TITAN BOOKS
RATING: ★★

The ninth in Titan's Alien series, and one of the best yet. The books have showed an obsession with scientists trying to breed the aliens for bio-weapon usage, and Labyrinth continues this.

Doctor Paul Church is the latest nut to try and harness the aggression of the aliens, and is conducting experiments on the aliens within a warren of tunnels on a space station. He has learned that the aliens die if dormant for too long, and that - wahy! - they are telepathic.

However, his supply of aliens is from a less-than-legal source, and as Anthony Crespi conducts a routine investigation into Church's work, it appears that all is not what it seems. It also appears that Church's association with the alien race goes back to a very traumatic experience within an alien hive. Labyrinth is another fine extension to the Alien series, with the mad doctor actually coming across as a fairly sympathetic character, while the gore quotient is topped up with much use of piston jaws to remove brains!

A little bit of knowledge of existing Titan Alien mythology is needed (there are now battle suits which are acid resistant, for example) but overall Labyrinth will entertain even the fairest of alien fans. After all, no matter how many sequels the Alien series produces, it will never feature as many of the acid-blooded nasties as in Titan's series. Nice one Titan, keep it up!



ALIEN: THE SPECIAL EFFECTS

PRICE: £12.99
RELEASED BY: TITAN BOOKS
RATING: ★★★★★

Cinefex magazine enjoys unrivalled access to the behind-the-scenes teams of the hottest movies. This American magazine is a trivia fan's dream, and Titan have collated the three issues concentrating on the Alien films into one bumper fact-fest. The Alien films are rightly regarded as classics of their time, and due to the

shock nature of their content it is easy to take for granted the realism with which the acid-spitting critter moves and attacks. This book duly reveals all the tricks and methods used to make an alien move, and highlights the advances in technology between the first film in 1979 and 1990's Alien 3.

The Special Effects talks to all the main men behind the three films, including directors, Ridley Scott, James Cameron and David Fincher to find out exactly what their goals were when furthering the alien mythos. The text then moves on to the special effects teams who in turn recall

problems they had - most of which are based on time restrictions. It is also interesting to see that although Giger, the alien's creator, was keen to avoid a man in a rubber suit effect, it wasn't until Alien 3 that this was achieved. And then only in part. The text is incredibly detailed and in a tiny font, which can make the book hard-going. However, on the plus side, the pictures are incredible and detail every aspect of the effects process. Model shots, alien constructions and an incredibly detailed section regarding the Queen alien from the second film make this a stunning book.



Alien aficionados must consider this an essential addition, while anyone who owns all three films should consider it a worthy extra to their collection.

X FILES: INTERNAL AFFAIRS

PRICE: £9.99
RELEASED BY: TITAN BOOKS
RATING: ★★

Mulder and Scully's comic book adventures continue, as Titan unveil four new adventures for the FBI pair. Donor opens the quartet with a grisly tale of a dead man returning from the grave to take back organs his wife donated without his permission! A particularly gory story, the zombie takes back his eyes, liver and bone marrow(!) before the story reaches its predictable conclusion. Kanashibari is a weak 'monster of the week' affair with a group of mates being offed by a demon, but the best two are saved until last. 'Silver Lining' tells of a strange coat, with the titular material sewn inside. If anyone touches this lining they are absorbed into the cloth, and the person wearing it

grows even better looking. Thus, when it falls into the hands of a hideously scarred mean, his vanity kicks in and he goes on a spree to retrieve his lost looks. It sounds daft, yet is very enjoyable. E.L.F is the best of the bunch. A doctor claims to hear alien voices, and starts to wrap everything in tin foil to screen his brain from their commands. His behaviour grows stranger and stranger much to his wife's concern, and Mulder and Scully investigate. The resolution is both comical and gory, as the mad doctor starts to think the aliens are in his brain! Three out of four ain't bad at all, and



this is another worthy supplement to one of the best programmes on the box.

ALIENS: OUTBREAK

PRICE: £11.99
RELEASED BY: TITAN BOOKS
RATING: ★★★★★

With Alien Resurrection about to burst into cinemas in January, Titan are taking the opportunity to revamp their Dark Horse alien graphic novels. It's a worthy addition to the alien canon. Across its pages a religious cult infect the planet with alien spore, and as mankind tries to eradicate the menace, society starts to collapse. In the meantime, Wilks and Billie are sent with a marine team to try and bring back an alien to dissect, but a secondary party doesn't want them to make it alive. OutBreak is a stunning book, and incredibly well drawn. Surprisingly the newly-added colour doesn't detract from the dark look at all. Alien fans will love it because it is choc-full of Queens, Facehuggers, and millions of piston-jawed killers, and the plot also reintroduces the 'Space Jockey' seen in the first film. Dark Horse have also added a handful of extra pages to the book in the form of a sub section regarding the life cycle of the alien. A brilliant book, and a worthy re-release. Let's just hope Alien Resurrection keeps the alien flame burning.

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S AN UNOFFICIAL SIMPSON'S GUIDE

PRICE: £4.99
RELEASED BY: VIRGIN
RATING: ★★★★★

Long overdue, and very funny indeed, this unofficial guide to Springfield's many denizens is well worth a punt. The authors have pulled together a brilliant guide to every Simpsons episode shown to date, along with a who's who in Springfield and production details. Obviously, reviews of episodes are very subjective, but Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood split the episodes up into sub-categories, including Premise, Characters Featured, Trivia and Homage. With every Simpsons episode borrowing from at least one film, the latter is particularly cool - yet never seems

anal. Other categories pop up, too, with 'Mmmmm' used to describe Homer's food loves (as in 'Mmmmm floor pie!'), and the secret past of Moe the bar owner! Every aspect of the series is revealed in detail, yet the writing style is light. The breaking up of episodes is neatly done, and the style of humour prevalent in the series is also captured in the book. There are even 'Notes for the Uneducated' in case some of the cleverer pastiches in the series go over your head! Every couch gag is also listed (the scenes before an episode which change every month), just to add that definitive touch. Hopefully a volume 2 is on the cards, as this is one of the finest books about Springfield's misfits you'll ever find. Cool.

VIDEO OUTER LIMITS 10

PRICE: £10.99
RELEASED BY: BEYOND VISION
RATING: ★★

Another themed release from the inconsistent US series. This time, the two episodes are based around androids, and their relationships with mankind. In Resurrection, the Earth has been cleansed by a horrific germ released during a future war. Only androids remain, and these are ruled by the paranoid Molloch and his army of military aides. Two androids have pursued an experiment to create a human, and the result is a fully grown man called Cain. As the androids teach him of his new world and the past, he starts to realise the emotion that separates him from his 'parents.' Molloch then gets wind of his existence and sends out troops to kill him, so androids can continue in their quest to rule the planet. Needless to say, Cain wins the day, disabling every robot on the planet via a handy and unguarded device. But then he faces the thought of life on his own with little or no food or future. Or does he? Valerie 23 is the better of the two episodes, and concentrates on the relationship between humans and doting machines. Valerie is a new droid created to assist paraplegics and act as a companion

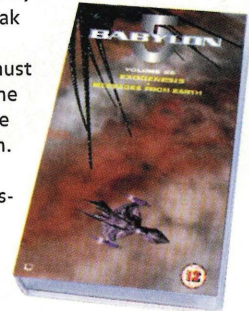
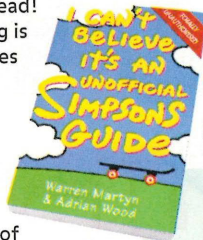
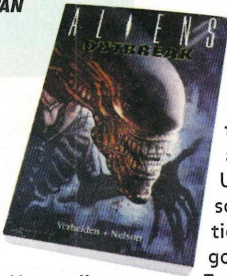
and aide for them. However, Valerie suffers from a programming bug which means she gets an obsessive fixation on her patient, Frank. After a promising start to the friendship, Frank starts to enjoy the company of another woman, sending Valerie over the edge, as she uses certain programming inhibitions to her advantage - ie. nothing should get in the way of her partner's happiness. Valerie 23 was one of the first episodes to be shown of the New Outer Limits in the UK, and it's easy to see why. It is a taut, well written episode, with none of the cheesy twists in the tail the series often suffers from.

BABYLON 5 25

PRICE: £12.99
RELEASED BY: WARNER VIDEO
RATING: ★★★★★

Easily the best sci-fi series on TV at the moment, Babylon 5 has just been confirmed for a fifth series, and is also set to boast two spin-off movies. And with new episodes on the way for fans of the series, Warner's ongoing dual episode releases have hit their stride. Volume 25

features Exogenesis and Messages from Earth, both of which are fine examples of the series at its best. Exogenesis expands upon the Shadow War sub-plot which has enlivened the series. Tracking the huge Shadow fleet, the crew can only watch as an alien pauses in its advance. But for what reason? A good story, and a perfect foil for the effects-intensive Messages from Earth. Earth Force have found a seemingly dead Shadow ship, and plan to use a human telepath to pilot it. If successful, they want to wreak havoc across the galaxy and thus must be stopped and the ship used for more scientific research. A party leaves Babylon 5 to investigate, but are attacked by an invisible threat. The SFX in this episode are breathtaking. Babylon 5 is often labelled as slow, but Messages from Earth is truly fast-paced episode. If you can put up with a few comments which require a bit of past involvement with the series, then this is as good a place as any to start a Babylon 5 collection.



a poem about

pop Chicks

by Purple Ronnie

Vimto gives you energy
Which pop chicks are about
It makes them kick and jump
around
Until their boobs pop out

as drunk by Purple Ronnie

groove Shimmy boing

Vimto

Puts a smile on your face

All the difference you need...

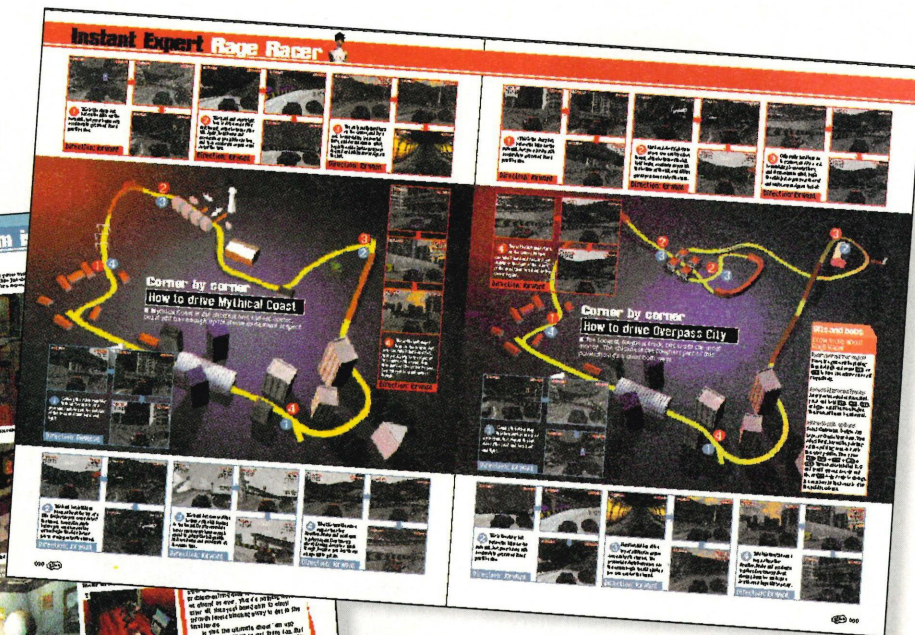


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Q&A

I was writing to ask a few questions...

1. Can mere mortals like us be allowed to play *Soul Blade*? It's ace!
2. What about the Jet Ski doobry-what?
3. Why is the Milka cow purple?
4. You got the summary of *Thunderhawk 2* wrong. It doesn't use a memory card.
5. Have you got any CDs, tips-books or any cool things planned?
6. Sorry, but I thought *Micro Machines V3* was boring! After spending money on a multi-tap and three more pads, I'd hardly say it was enlightening. Bye bye,
Chris Dunn
Arundel, West Sussex

1. Yes. Yes it is, isn't it?
2. I know of no game called *Jet Ski doobry-what*. Not thinking of *Jet Rider* are we? If you are, approach with caution.
3. You live in Sussex and I live in London. I don't understand your question. (Draw your own conclusions from this.)
4. Sorry.
5. Yes, we have got cool things planned. But - for now - it's secret.
6. Um, you need mates too.

WHO'S AT THE DOOR?

After receiving a large amount of money I decided to go on a spending spree. I was thoroughly tempted by the charms of Nintendo and their wonder machine, and one annoying bloke in the shop nearly convinced me until I thought, hey, why don't I buy the only successful next generation console, the PlayStation. Yes, I thought, brilliant. So £287 got me the best computer I've had for ages plus memory card, extra controller, fancy official PS carrycase thing and a copy of *WipEout 2097*, *MMV3* and *Descent*. I also thought, well, I want the best advice on what to get, so I bought every mag I could find and rather stupidly too as I have trusted Emap for my Sega needs so really I could have saved £14 and just



bought this. Was it worthy? Yes! Well done. Now I need your help...

And it's at this point we have to interrupt, because this letter is from Chris Dunn, who already has a letter on this page. And the funny thing is that he must have written this letter first, because he's already bored of MMV3 by the time of the first letter. What's more, he even asks some of the same questions. Chris, just for you, as far as we know, there is no Red Bull team in WipEout 2097.

QUALITY STREET?

I am an Italian boy and I always read your magazine and its Italian equivalent Super Console PlayStation. I think you are both doing a very good job. But I'm writing to give my opinion on something that I feel is a problem. The quality check on games by Sony. In fact, last month I read in an Italian magazine about these checks, in particular a comment which referred to the fact that games are checked on the technical side, omitting playability and lastability (in my opinion the two most important things in a game) So in game shops we find rubbish like *Killing Zone*, *Galaxy Fight*, *Revolution X*,

Cyber Speed and *Prime Goal*.

I decided to write this letter when I played the worst game ever: *Po'ed*! My personal advice to SCEE is to take some Beta testers to check games too, but these Betas should be done by the normal players who buy the games every month and read the magazines. So my question is, what do you think about this problem? Francesco 'Dux' Fenarol
Somewhere in Italy

Bad games are the fraying ends of this rich and textured fabric we call videogames. They should be snipped off - that's what we think. Beta testers would be a good idea, though. Are you after the job?

PRAISE WHERE DUE

I am really disappointed to find out that the PlayStation won't be getting a conversion of *X:Com 3: X:Com Apocalypse* thanks to Microprose's future development plans.

I am a HUGE fan of both *X:Com* and *X:Com: Terror From the Deep* and have spent more hours playing these two games than I've ever devoted to any other game in over 15 years of videogaming. I came across the preview of *X:Com 3* and it looked and sounded fantastic - the mother of all

X:Com games in fact. They claimed a PlayStation version would appear soon after the PC game. Eager to know more I wrote to Microprose only to be told the company is now concentrating on PC CD-Rom titles. Well, thanks a bunch Microprose, I don't own a PC and have no intention to do so and I'd like to know WHY Microprose feel the PlayStation is unworthy of its time. Any ideas?

On a lighter note. The 1997 preview video was excellent. *G-Police* and *Colony Wars* were shining. Any chance of another such gem in the future?
Ross Sillifant,
Holsworthy

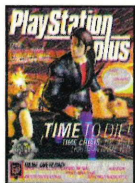
Ross wasn't the only one to congratulate us on the video. E-mails, voice-mail messages... We had congratulations from every source. Gee, thanks everybody. As for Microprose? Looks like a trip to Tandy's in order if you want to play X:Com 3.

ONE MORE THING...

I'm writing in response to Sean from Taunton's opinions on the PlayStation. (issue 22). While I agree with him in some respects I also feel he is missing the point on others.

Over the years I have owned the first Atari console, a BBC, a Sega Master System and MegaDrive, a Gameboy, a Super NES and, as from a couple of months ago, a PlayStation. I have therefore played 100s of games in my time. I don't believe I ever fell into the rut Sean talks of - my upgrades were to keep up with the times, not because of a lack of quality software. In my 11 or so years of gaming, in terms of true originality, the BBC B and Master System, amongst others, cannot be beaten. They are from two very distinct eras but were both releasing innovative software and creating genres almost from scratch, along with the NES and Spectrum. The whole 16bit war changed things, and for Sean to say that the Megadrive was resting on its laurels is absurd. Sure, a genre may be visited time and

A WHOLE
THREE PAGES
OF DEBATE AND
ANGST THIS
MONTH - COR!



time again, but over the years, the big best-sellers have been those that redefined genres - *Streets of Rage*, *Zelda*, *Mario* et al. Sure they had their sequels, but they were so different from their predecessors, they may well have been called something else. The next point to remember is that a successful character is marketable. Why create a whole new persona for a game when popular characters will do just as good a job and save time and money? It may sell a duff game? How often has that happened? Not with *Mario*. Or *Zelda*. Or *Sonic* (although he's pushing it). Those characters that did star in crap sequels rightly disappeared.

The other factor to remember is that with both the PlayStation and the N64 the new technology means that genres can again be resculpted - the machine's limits will always be pushed back. Just look at *Tomb Raider* and *Mario 64* to name but two.

Finally, perhaps the whole sequel thing can be explained like this. The console games industry is mirroring the film industry. It has big names (Lara Croft, F1 etc.) its moneyspinners but it also has its small independents too. If *Total NBA 97* is a Stallone flick, then *Worms* is Man Bites Dog. Even the hype is the same.

So, to throw in a cliché, variety is the spice of life. Obviously you don't want to buy a bad game. That's why PlayStation Plus exists. Anyway, like you can afford to buy every game? I think not.

Mat Carey,
Glasgow.

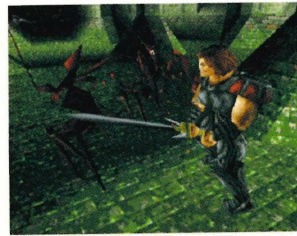
YOU WANT ANSWERS?

On my holiday I took a trip down to a local arcade on the seafront. There I saw a very large crowd of people gathered around the brand new *Tekken 3* machine. I took one look at the game and instantly fell in love and with that piped a constant stream of 50 pence pieces into it. Once I had no money left at all I then remembered you saying it was coming to PlayStation. The next day I went into a games shop and asked when it might be arriving over here, and they said possibly two years from now. Is this true? I also want to know if it will be possible for me to use



the old blu-tack trick on my PAL machine to run *Tekken 3* on it? I remember you saying that some import games won't work with this trick anymore. If it is possible, when will the Japanese version be released? Will I still have big black borders top and bottom of my screen? And will I have any slowdown? No game like this should run like that at all. Also, does the same apply to *Time Crisis*?
Russell Davis,
Gillingham.

Inquisitive soul, aren't we? Ever thought of a career in tabloid journalism? Right, here goes. There is no clear word on Tekken 3 at all at the moment, but it does seem likely that Namco would want to convert it for the PlayStation, and the company's success with Time Crisis seems to pave the way for advanced coin-op engines making their way onto 32bit consoles. Nevertheless, I wouldn't hold your breath for a Tekken 3 release just yet. It sounds as if you would consider getting it on import the second it arrives so you want to know whether you can use the famous blu-tack (or biro) trick to play an NTSC game. Providing you're able to perform this trick all import games should run on a PAL machine. It does, however, depend on when you bought your machine since the later PlayStations were sorted to stop this happening. Basically, if you bought your console for less than £200 the chances are you won't be able to do the biro trick on it. By the way, if you can do the biro trick, you'll need to run it through a scart cable or it'll come out in black and white. Got it? As for borders, traditionally the NTSC (i.e. import) versions don't have them and PAL do. The slow-down you speak of is nothing to do with the difference between PAL and NTSC. It just runs faster on NTSC machines as they at run at 60Hz as opposed to the PAL's slower 50Hz. And Time Crisis? As you know we've played it on NTSC and it's a corker. The PAL version? We'll have to wait and see. Phew!



KINKY BOOTS ETC.

I was elated to read in your July issue that *Deathtrap Dungeon* is in the making. And as I scanned the promising screenshots I grew more and more excited. Until... I saw the heroine. I was so disappointed, yet another female character obviously created by male designers. I have played *Deathtrap Dungeon* and many other Fighting Fantasy gamebooks and I am certain that the creators are aware of the female percentage (admittedly lower than the male) so why does the female character pander to the male fantasies?

Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying the heroine should wear a BHS floral frock, but to walk into the depths of *Deathtrap Dungeon* with just kinky boots, a pair of knickers and a length of wire is frankly quite ridiculous.

With female gamers still in the minority but certainly growing, designers have to take us into consideration. Even Lara Croft - who was said to create a new wave of female characters - was created on the base of an ultimate male fantasy.

I am not a miserable feminist, just a female gamer who wants a fairer and more considerate representation of female characters in the games we play. If I was Lara Croft I would fall over and if I was the DD heroine, I would freeze to death.

I don't usually get annoyed by these sort of things, but when the games I enjoy seemingly ignore female gamers, I feel I have to voice my complaint. Does anyone else agree?
Catriona MacFarlane,
Glasgow

This, Catriona, is your chance. Having your letter here means your voice is heard within the industry. Your next step is to change things for the better and you must do it from the inside. We look forward to the first Catriona MacFarlane-designed game.

On a lighter note, just what's wrong with a BHS floral frock?



STEVE'S LETTER UNCUT

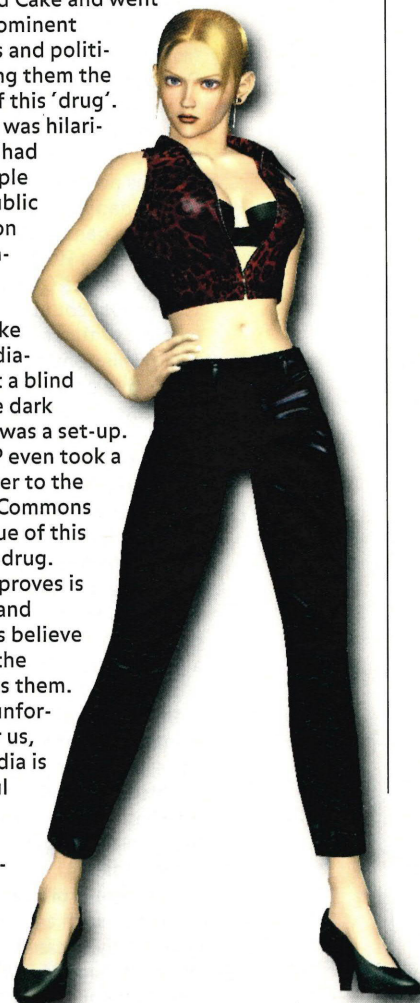
I am writing in reply to Derek Richardson's letter about censorship. I totally agree with his views. I myself also believe that us adult gamers have a right to choose what we see or don't see. In the case of younger gamers it is up to the parents' discretion as to what their children see.

As to why MPs spout off about the 'dangers' of violent videogames, it is simple. They are complete gimps who believe anything anybody says. If they think they have the chance of a moral crusade to win votes they're off like a rat up a drainpipe. The problem is, they go off on these crusades with no idea of what they're talking about.

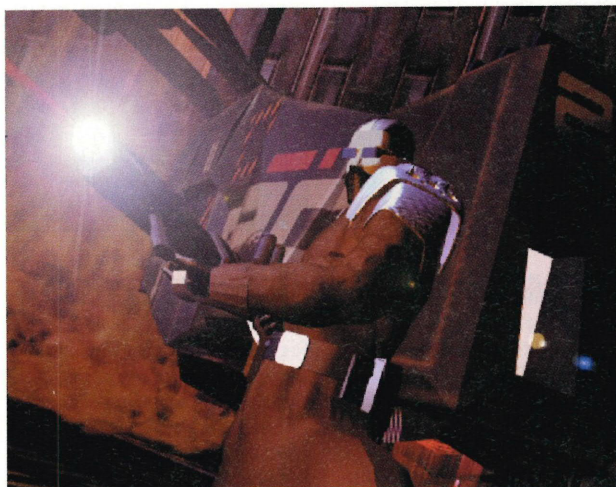
An excellent example of this came from an episode of the TV series *Brass Eye*. The writers made up a fictional drug called Cake and went around prominent celebrities and politicians telling them the dangers of this 'drug'. The result was hilarious! They had these people making public information films warning us all how dangerous Cake was with dialogue that a blind man in the dark could see was a set-up.

One MP even took a white paper to the House of Commons on the issue of this new Cake drug.

All this proves is that MPs and celebrities believe anything the media tells them. Which is unfortunate for us, as the media is a powerful forum. Anyway, who's running this country, the government or the



**CENSORSHIP?
DO WE NEED
IT? STEVEN
HALL THINKS
NOT. HERE HE
IS (RIGHT)
MAKING HIS
VIEWS
KNOWN.**



tabloid newspapers?

Censorship laws on games are totally unnecessary. Japan doesn't have any game censorship, and they have one of the least violent societies on earth. Stop the stupidity now. **Steven Hall, Co. Durham.**

Don't get us started on censorship... Just don't.

(EXPLETIVE DELETED)

Glad to see the Plus master is still here and giving a pure 100% in the review stakes.

I have a problem (apart from being mildly psychotic). During the past year I have purchased a link cable and a mouse for my PlayStation only to find that support for these is non-existent.

The inability to use a mouse in games like the forthcoming *Warhammer SOTHR* and *C&C* was a travesty. I've lost count of the amount of times I've had to replay missions due to the (expletive deleted) controller selecting the wrong (expletive deleted) unit. Oh no, doesn't (expletive deleted) me off too much.

The second bone of contention I have is the lack of support for the link cable. Let's face it, however good a game's AI is, if you play the game long enough it falls into a pretty predictable pattern (i.e. *Syndicate Wars* - outstanding game, though). Human opponents give an edge of unpredictability and are more satisfying to defeat which ultimately extends the lifespan of any game and sells more copies.

We were promised link-up on games such as *Destruction Derby 2*, *Syndicate Wars*, *Warcraft 2* and *V-Rally*. I don't want to hear that not every-

one can afford to link up two PlayStations and buy two copies of a game because there are over two million PlayStation owners in the UK (allegedly) and hiring games makes the cost negligible.

So more link-ups and more mouse support from software developers please and no excuses otherwise my mouse and link-up cable will find new uses as a knuckle duster and garrote respectively. Thank you for listening, **Sarah, Bournemouth.**

p.s I've played *Tekken 2* with a broken arm. Only a banana queer wouldn't.

See the 'expletive deleted' in Sarah's letter? We didn't do that, she did it for us. See the use of the phrase 'banana queer'? She did that too. Totally agree about the peripheral misery though.

NURSE, THE SCREENS...

Your readers may or may not be interested to know that an anagram of Lara Croft is Art or Calf. As in cows or legs? That is the question. **Anon.**

Written on a non-Eastenders night, obviously.

A MASS DEBATE ENDED

I say Lara Croft is the PlayStation's best babe, but my mate Adam reckons Rachel from *Porsche Challenge* is much foxier. We decided that your decision would settle the argument. A pint rests on it. What do you think? **Toby Tennant, Leicester**

Why drag me into this? And surely it all comes down to a matter of taste? OK then, Lara.

FAQ

THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH ARE, ONCE AGAIN, MET WITH STRAIGHT ANSWERS.

Q Have you got any news if there's going to be a *Tomb Raider 2* demo out soon? If so, when's it coming out? And does Lara Croft crawl through low holes? Finally, will there be a training level on *TR2* like there was Lara's Home on *TR1*?

A *Core is currently preparing short demos of Tomb Raider 2 to spearhead a massive in-store promotion for the game's November release. Expect to see it sometime around October. Low holes? No. Training level? Dunno.*

Q I have heard that *Broken Sword 2* is coming out for the PC. Will it come out for the PlayStation. Oh, and do you have any ideas on how to get out of Ireland, past the goat?

A *No details yet, but it seems likely Broken Sword 2 will be PlayStation bound. As for the goat, when he knocks you over, click on the far left plough. He'll be trapped.*

Q I love *Resident Evil* and have spent many happy hours playing it. So when will *Resident Evil 2* be coming out and what will be the difference to the first one?

A *Virgin has scheduled Resident Evil 2 for a March release. There are more zombies, a larger play area, and a better camera system. The game is better graphically, with more backdrop detail and more secondary characters and monsters.*

Q The coolest arcade game around is surely *Die Hard* Arcade. So when will it be coming out for us PlayStation owners?

A *It won't. Sega created the coin-op, and as such won't be porting it to Sony's rival console. If the Bandai deal had stayed, however, things may have been different.*

Q Will the superb Namco arcade game *Tokyo Showdown* be coming out for the Sony PlayStation in the very near future?

A *No news as of yet, although bizarrely Prop Cycle has allegedly been confirmed. A question about the internet next methinks...*

Q I'm a web fan and was doing the odd bit of surfing when I came across the Emap net. But there's no PlayStation Plus on it! Why not.

A *Patience. If you wait, we will come... Oh yes... Hey, I was right that was a question about the internet. What's this? I feel a Fighting Force query coming on.*

Q I read your superb preview on *Fighting Force*. Sounds great. So my question is, when's this monster game coming out?

A *It seems my powers are strong this month. I see a September release for *Fighting Force* and I see my next question is about a game recommendation.*

Q I'm buying a game soon, but there's too much to choose from. Help! You play 'em all you lucky bugger what do you recommend?

A *Er... Super Puzzle Fighter 2 Turbo pulls our chain on a fairly regular basis. But you might not like puzzle games. So assuming you've got a fair selection of the classics like *Tomb Raider*, *Resident Evil*, *WipEout*, *Tekken*, *Rage Racer* and so on then I'd go for... Oh, I don't know, check out our guide on page 102.*

STREET FIGHTER EX

THE LOST WORLD

APOCALYPSE

DUKE NUKEM

